Week ending November 7 1953 *Every Wednesday Fourpence*

JOHN BULL

How a hospital saved the baby who was born too soon

LIFE AMONG THE AMAZON HEADHUNTERS

C. S. FORESTER'S NEW HORNBLOWER ADVENTURE

Caley make wonderful chocolates

'Do I feel like a chocolate? I end by *looking* like a chocolate when there's Caley in the house. Dari-Rich is the all-milk assortment I could eat and eat and eat. I can't resist the thick covering of full-cream milk chocolate—and the centres . . . Nut Logs, Truffles, smooth Coffee Creams, rich Coconut Eclairs, fruity centres, toffee centres, every kind of delicious temptation. Come on, let's spoil our lunch.'

Caley make Dari-Rich

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EDITORIAL

Big switch

FOR years the public has been urged, bullied and persuaded to Switch Off: "Don't leave the light on! Use one bar of the fire instead of two! Be economical with the cooker!"

And we knew that if we didn't, the power stations could simply "shed the load" and leave us shivering in the dark. Sometimes they did.

We learnt our uncomfortable lesson. We saved electricity.

LAST year the expected increase in usage was six per cent. It turned out to be only 3.7 per cent. We were in such a state that many of us felt really guilty when we switched on the fire of a cold morning.

LORD CITRINE
People should use more . . .

But suddenly the British Electricity Authority has switched over, leaving the public looking very silly. It now wants us to use *more*!

Lord Citrine, the chairman, recently announced: "We shall try to induce people to use more electricity. We have new expensive plant and if we do not sell more power, it will cost a great deal more to people who do use it.

"If it were possible to increase the load factor from the present forty-five per cent to sixty per cent we could make a material reduction in the price."

IN fact, it has been doing the opposite. In June the South-West Board put its price up from seven-eighths of a penny to one penny. The Midlands followed suit.

And it appears that we are *not* safe from power cuts this winter. The National Joint Consultative Committee on Load-Spreading has forecast that there will be a five per cent shortage of electricity.

The ordinary citizen feels a little puzzled. . . .

HOWEVER, if the Authority really wants us to use more electricity, there is one way to do it. Bring the prices down first.

The Authority made £7,280,000 surplus last year.

But the Electricity Act enjoins the Authority to pay its way from year to year, and it is afraid that an initial deficit—even if more than made up over a long period—would give the impression that it was not doing so.

But this is obeying the letter of the law, not the spirit.

If we *can* have cheap power, the British Electricity Authority should supply it.

THIS WEEK'S COVER

THE Chinese started it. They exploded crackers to settle their quarrels and celebrate the New Year. Much later, a man by the name of Guido Faukes gave England an eternal excuse to begin the year's dullest month with a festival of bonfires and pyrotechnics. Artist Henry Neave frankly admits that, while his family enjoy the fear and trembling at today's atomic bangers, he prefers the traditional "sparklers" of his youth.

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This multi-purpose tool locks on to work with *tremendous grip* and stays there *with hands off* until the release lever is touched—how often have you wished for just that? Use it as super pliers, a vice, wrench, clamp and so on. The Mole Wrench is your "third hand"—sturdy, easy to handle—really something to treasure.

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If any difficulty write to:
M. MOLE & SON BIRMINGHAM, 3

FREE SPEECH

Exams and a boy's career

WHEN my son, a pupil at the local grammar school, heard that he had done well in his general certificate examination, he asked me if he could take a two-year sixth form course. Since he was set on it, I agreed—but the decision was against my better judgment.

My misgivings arose from my own experience as an employer. Recently I had before me two applicants for a job, both of them fresh from their national service training. I gave the post to a young man who had left a grammar school at sixteen. He had two years' experience of our type of work and reliable testimonials to show that he did it well. The other youngster had gone straight into the army from the sixth form and had never held a job. He had a good examination record, but examinations are no test of initiative, tact and self-confidence—the qualities I look for in an employee. Appointing him would have been a shot in the dark. —T. K. L., Yorkshire.

Whither The Wires

TIME, labour and money were wasted and considerable damage was done to the floorboards when an electrician attempted to trace a short-circuit in the electricity system at my home. The law should insist that a blue-print of the wiring should be drawn up when a house is built and later additions or alterations noted on it. Such a chart could conveniently be kept in a folder attached to the meter. — A. J. PARSONS, Foxearth Road, Selsdon, Surrey.

Fish-feeder

TO feed his fish while he was away from home for a week, a friend of mine constructed the automatic feeder shown in this photograph. He

removed the face from an old clock and attached a propelling pencil to the hour-hand spindle. At the bottom of the clock he fixed a film spool. Pencil and spool carried a calico belt, with small containers of food attached to it. One container was emptied into the tank every twenty-four hours. — W. WILSON-WEBB, Beechcroft, Gipsy Lane, Knebworth, Hertfordshire.

Cats And Colours

THE behaviour of my male half-Persian cat seems to contradict the general opinion of scientists that cats are colour-blind. An unpainted pencil was one of his favourite toys, but he discarded it immediately when I produced a new red one. I realized that it might be the smell, not the colour, which was attracting him, so I tried another test. I threw down two balls of wool, one black and one red. He pounced on the red one. Then I gave him brown and red, and again he chose red. The wools were of the same texture and thickness, and the balls were of the same size, so this does seem to indicate perception of colour.—MRS. I. E. EVERATT, Goldspink Lane, Newcastle upon Tyne.

The test with the wool did not prove that the cat had colour vision, says a veterinary surgeon. It was not the colour of the red ball which attracted him but its brightness; it reflected more light than the darker wools. He could see a difference between the balls but it was a difference which could be recorded in a black and white photograph. A more accurate test of colour vision is the ability to distinguish between two coloured lamps adjusted to an equal brightness. To a cat they both appear the same.

Starts in John Bull soon

SECRET BATTLES OF THE
DETECTIVES IN KHAKI

The authentic record of the army's Special Investigation Branch, told fully for the first time

Further details next week

Faces In The Dark

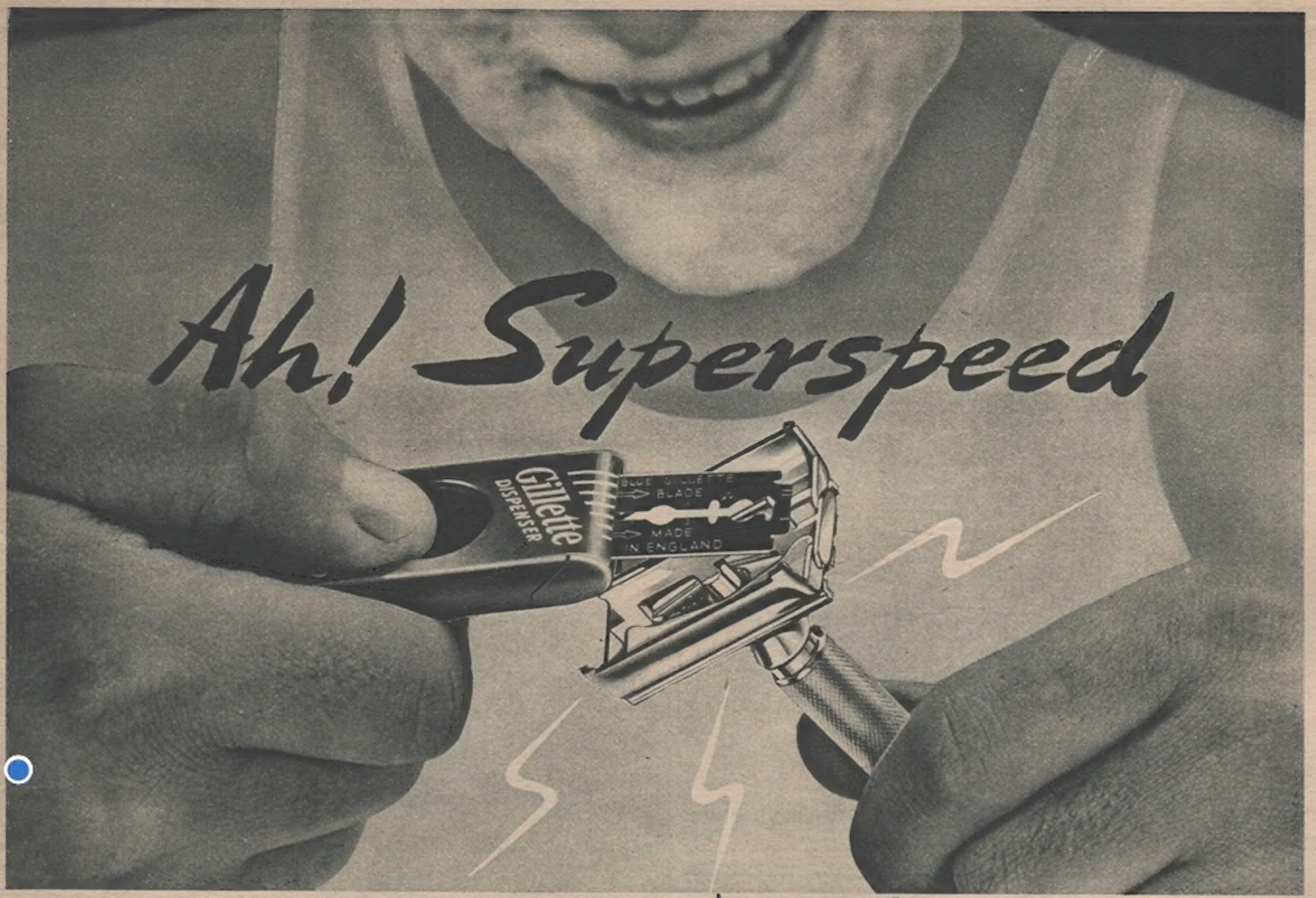
READING about the weird lantern faces made from swedes and turnips ("Free Speech," October 17) reminded me of a Somerset winter many years ago when the lads of Petherton—my brother among them—went courting the girls of Stoke, two miles away. The Stoke boys made some of these ghostly faces, and on moonless nights they would hang them on bushes and in the broken windows of a ruined mill on the road between the two villages. But they did not frighten the visitors from Petherton. Not a bit of it. It is nearly fifty years now since my brother married his girl. — MRS. SALTER, Deacon Street, Swindon, Wiltshire.

Emergency Plan

AN Operation Hornblower ("Free Speech," October 17) *was* planned in the Middle East during the war. A force was given the task of demolishing harbour and shore installations at Alexandria if Rommel's forces broke through the British lines at El Alamein. Parties of naval ratings were distributed throughout the city. I was with a group which was to deal with a fuel and oil depot, an oil jetty and certain main roads. We were to escape by sea with the help of Greek fishermen and their caiques. Demolition was to begin on receipt of the order "Carry Out Operation Hornblower." Thanks to Montgomery and the Eighth Army, this order never came.—T. G. M., Liverpool, 17.

. . . I was under the impression that Maria, the first wife of C. S. Forester's character Captain Hornblower, died in the book *Flying Colours* while giving birth to young

Continued on page 6



Quick-action razor with quick-feed Blue Gillette Dispenser

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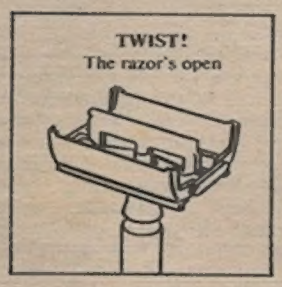

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Here's the chance of a lifetime to take up the world's smoothest, fastest shaving system. Quick-action one-piece Gillette Razor. Quick-feed Dispenser with six Blue Gillette Blades with used blade container. Compact moulded case with transparent lid. All this for only 6/6d.

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Have you tried the new Gillette Shaving Cream? It's so economical

If it's a man . . . it's an

Ever-Ready

RAZOR SET

A daily reminder of You

He will remember you with gratitude every morning when he uses this magnificent Streamline Ever-Ready Razor Set. It includes a heavy chromium plated snap-action razor and 6 Ever-Ready Corrux blades fitted in a strong ivoride case.

COMPLETE IN CASE 11/6

Give him an

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ACID INDIGESTION?

Take my advice . . .

"I'm often asked what I advise for indigestion and other tummy troubles. I always recommend 'Milk of Magnesia'* . . . in fact it's what I use myself. It's ideal for all the family whenever there's a tummy upset.

'Milk of Magnesia' is a mild laxative as well as a most effective antacid, so it helps to keep the system both sweet and regular. And being so gentle in action, it's ideal for Baby's 'windigestion', too."

4 oz. size 1/8 — 12 oz. size 3/4

'Milk of Magnesia'

* REGD. TRADE MARK

The Family Standby for Acid Indigestion

FREE SPEECH

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

Horatio. But in *Hornblower Of The Atropos* (now being serialized in JOHN BULL) Maria has a second child, little Maria. I cannot believe that Forester's fine eye for detail would miss such a glaring point of continuity.—M. CULLEN, Pembrokeshire.

The stages of Hornblower's career have been unfolded in "Mr. Midshipman Hornblower" (1950), "Lieutenant Hornblower" (1952), "The Happy Return" (1937), "A Ship Of The Line" (1938), "Flying Colours" (1938), "The Commodore" (1945) and "Lord Hornblower" (1946). "Hornblower Of The Atropos" describes events in Hornblower's life between "Lieutenant Hornblower" and "The Happy Return." Maria dies in "Flying Colours," giving birth to Richard, her third child. Hornblower marries Lady Barbara between "Flying Colours" and "The Commodore." This week's instalment of "Hornblower Of The Atropos" begins on page 18.

The Saint in Europe

See page 20

Men In Shops

IN her "Free Speech" letter, Mrs. L. M. gave her opinion of husbands as shoppers. My advice to men is: never go shopping with your wife. Last week I did. We went to see a new winter coat my wife wanted. It was a beauty and it fitted her perfectly. Then the assistant suggested trying on the jacket of a costume. "You'll need it in the winter, madam," she said. Another perfect fit. I weakened, and paid for both coat and costume. As we walked away from the shop my wife said casually: "If you had not been there I would never have dreamed of buying the costume too."—E. THOMPSON, Loraine Road, Dundee.

. . . My husband, a former grocer's manager, has often told me not to be persuaded by sales talk into buying extras that I do not really want. But I remember a day when I asked him to buy me one tin of sardines. He brought back two tins, not one, and also two jars of meat paste, four jellies and a tin of condensed milk. "I could hardly ask for just one tin of sardines," he said when I commented on the unnecessary purchases. —MRS. E. M. B., Hersham, Surrey.

. . . My husband seems to want to examine the entire contents of a shop before he makes a purchase.—MRS. I. C., Stafford.

. . . A husband who takes his wife with him when he does his shopping invariably ends up with something his wife likes and he does not. Hence the "white elephants" in his wardrobe.—R. S., Carlisle.

The Gaelic

PRESUMABLY Gilbert Harding's excellent command of language does not extend to Gaelic. In part four of his life story, "Along My Line," he gives *Tigh Dhu* as the Gaelic for "House of God." These words mean "The Black House." *Tigh Dhe* would have been correct.—K. C., Aspley, Nottingham.

An Comunn Gaidhealach (The Highland Association) agrees, but points out that, although writers in English often render it as "dhu," the correct spelling of the Gaelic word for black is "dubh." "Along My Line" continues on page 26.

Greatest Success

IN the garden my three children have four large cardboard boxes, three pieces of wooden boarding, a pile of

sticks and an empty petrol drum. During the past few months these objects have served in turn as a school, a circus, a fair and a helicopter. Now they have become a sewer, a most complicated structure, which the children obviously regard as their greatest success so far.—MRS. N. SUTTON, Netherwoods Road, Headington, Oxford.

Hat In The Air

I USED to wonder why my husband bothered to watch football matches. If I asked him if it had been a good game, all he would say was "Not bad" or "All right." Then, last week, I went along with him. It was an eye-opener for me. He jumped for joy, howled in despair and thumped his neighbour on the back. When the home team scored he threw his hat into the air and could not find it again. On the way home we met a friend of his who asked how the game had gone. "Not bad," said my husband, "but too scrappy. They need a few new players."—MRS. F. K., North Staffordshire.

White Paint

IN Harry Zelinski's cover painting of Father holding the baby during Mother's first evening out (JOHN BULL, October 17) I noticed the white

skirting board and paintwork which appeared in his previous covers, The Arrival of the TV Set (September 26) and Back to School (September 5). I am curious to know if Mr. Zelinski has paint like this in his own home. When we moved into our present house we found everything cream—walls, 'doors, cupboards, skirting boards, even fireplaces. With young children about I had a continual battle to keep clean. — MRS. L. ARCHER, Staffordshire.

There is white paintwork throughout Harry Zelinski's home at Westcliff-on-Sea, except in the kitchen, the dining-room and his studio, where the paint is a very light grey.

Letters intended for publication should be as brief as possible and include the sender's full name and address. John Bull pays a guinea for every letter printed. Readers with personal problems should send inquiries (other than medical) to John Bull Free Advice Service with a stamped addressed envelope for reply.

THE SHORT DRINK THAT GOES A LONG WAY!

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Cherry Brandy

MADE IN HOLLAND
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AVAILABLE IN
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FACES & PLACES

EVEN IN WINTER

ILFORD HP3 FILM

With an Ilford HP3 film in your camera, you can still take Faces and Places just as easily and just as successfully as in summer.

This very fast panchromatic film, which fits all popular cameras, makes photography possible, indoors and out, all through the winter months.

ILFORD FILMS FOR FACES AND PLACES ALL THE YEAR ROUND

The mother cannot touch her baby. She can only peer anxiously through the glass panel of the incubator room as Sister Murray tends the child

Battle for the baby who was born too soon

by DON EVERITT

Peanut arrived three months early, and she weighed one pound fourteen ounces. By all the rules, she should have died. But Sister Murray fought for her life—and won

SISTER MURRAY TOOK THE CALL at 3.30 p.m. The doctor was breathless through hurrying. "She was born at three ten," he said. "It's barely the twenty-seventh week of pregnancy. The weight's one pound fourteen ounces, and she's extremely weak. Can you take her?" Sister said, "Yes," and added quickly: "Don't let baby be washed, Doctor. Just as warm as possible in a towel or blanket."

Driver Monty Milton snapped on the alarm bell switch as soon as the sleek white ambulance slid out of the Henrietta Street depot and sped north, out into the Birmingham suburbs. In the back, Elizabeth Dent, the grey-haired little senior midwife, checked the resuscitator, then fixed the two hot-water bottles in the side-pockets of the premature baby basket.

Milton dodged the traffic and threaded the streets to the city's boundary with unerring accuracy. Seconds counted in this unequal race with death. By all the laws, no child can survive after fewer than twenty-eight weeks in the womb. Knots of people soberly watched the ambulance slide up the terraced street. Upstairs, the forty-two year old mother lay on the bed, exhausted. A rounded bundle of blanket emitted feeble squeaks—the squeaks of a baby too young to cry.

Nurse Dent took a swift look at the pale, almost wizened face, then tucked the whole bundle in the cradle-shaped basket. Milton replaced his cap and picked up the basket. Nurse Dent hurried into the ambulance, and reached for the resuscitator mask and tube. The baby, motionless now, was turning purple through lack of oxygen. Milton gently let in the clutch. Nurse Dent turned on the resuscitator. As she held the mask just over the space in the blankets above the baby's face, she strained to watch the tiny features. Too little oxygen was a danger—and so was too much.

The trio's destination, the premature baby unit of the Sorrento Maternity Hospital, lay twelve miles south across the city in the residential suburb of Moseley. Milton drove with all the skill he possessed, giving his fragile charge every chance.

But behind him, Elizabeth Dent grew anxious. Instead of turning a healthier pink, the baby got steadily bluer. Suddenly, the nurse flipped open the little window to the driving-cab. "We'll have to stop, Monty. She's not getting the oxygen." With swift, delicate fingers, the nurse put one end of a soft rubber catheter in the infant's mouth. Slowly, she sucked at the other end. After a few moments tiny spots of mucus appeared in the glass well in the middle of the catheter. Nurse Dent gave a little sigh of relief. "Perhaps she'll breathe better now," she murmured.

Meanwhile, in the two-storey premature unit

behind the Sorrento Hospital, Dorothy Murray, the petite sister-in-charge, got ready for the new patient. One of the six incubators was vacant. Sister prepared it so that the baby could go straight into ideal conditions. She set the oxygen at twenty per cent—the other eighty was fresh air filtered in through a rubber tube leading from a window. She put the humidity at seventy per cent, to make it easier for the baby to breathe. And she set the temperature at ninety-five degrees, simulating the conditions in the mother's womb.

The ambulance arrived just after five. Sister Murray put the bundle straight into the incubator, shut the hood, then put her hands through the portholes to unwrap the baby. Crooning softly as she worked, she happened to call the child "Peanut." The name stuck.

Fingers Like Bits Of Straw

Stripped of the blankets, Peanut was unbelievably tiny; her limbs were no thicker than the sister's fingers; her fingers were like bits of straw. The tissue beneath the skin was so thin that the bones were almost visible. How could such a scraggy fragment of humanity live?

She lay on one side, her bird-like head lolling to one side, wrinkling the skin on her neck. She was still unpleasantly purple. She struggled constantly to get her breath, violently sucking in the flesh below her fragile rib cage. With tender care, Sister Murray injected her with caffeine, a cardiac and respiratory stimulant, and made her comfortable in the incubator.

Though the odds on this baby's survival were the slimmest possible, one thing was very much in her favour. She had been born into a city endowed with what is probably the best premature baby unit in the world. For twenty-one years it has been rearing "prems," as the staff calls them, brought from all over the western Midlands and central Wales.

Pioneering in prematurity in Britain, the Sorrento unit has taught the staffs of nearly all the other units in the country, most of those in the Commonwealth, and many foreign doctors and nurses. The consultant paediatrician, who has been the genius behind the unit ever since its foundation, is at present disseminating her knowledge to hospitals throughout the world.

Throughout that first hour, Sister Murray hung anxiously about the incubator, watching for an improvement in Peanut's condition. But when the registrar came to examine her at a quarter past seven, Sister Murray had to tell him there had been little change. The doctor confirmed that the baby was not getting enough air because her lungs were poorly expanded. This oxygen-starving condition, known as atelectasis, and probably the most common in premature babies, causes more than half the deaths. The doctor reported one comforting factor: the child's heartbeat was fairly strong.

Only Twelve Inches Tall

Sister Murray put a gauze Bikini round the baby's loins, then checked her weight on a sterile sling inside the incubator, and measured her. From heel to crown she was twelve inches. The head circumference—the largest part of a newborn child—was ten inches, against the fourteen inches of the average full-term baby. The doctor finished his examination, and instructed sister to delay the baby's first feed because of her smallness and poor breathing; even digesting could exhaust her at this stage.

Somehow, Peanut struggled her way through the night. Her temperature fluctuated erratically. Three times it dropped below the red line which Sister Murray had drawn on the chart at ninety-six degrees. But as soon as the night nurse turned the incubator temperature fractionally higher, Peanut's shot up above the other safety line at ninety-nine degrees. A worried look never left the nurse's face.

Peanut's breathing improved a little by morning. Later, she had her first food—half a test-tube of dextrose and saline deftly injected by the doctor through a thread-like vein in the front of her scalp. During the day, Peanut developed three more disorders: oedema, anaemia and jaundice. All are common to premature babies. The oedema, a skin swelling caused by the inefficient kidneys, made the baby lethargic and cold, and Sister Murray increased the incubator heat.

The anaemia resulted from an increased destruction of red cells—which was also bringing on the jaundice—and from a lack of iron which the mother normally passes on in bulk towards the end of the pregnancy. To counteract this, Peanut had a transfusion. Whole blood was too bulky, so Sister had the plasma siphoned off and used only the concentrated red cells.

Peanut's life was now very much in the hands of Sister Murray. Like all premature babies, she had an impaired ability to form germ-fighting antibodies, making her excessively liable to infection. She was also short of certain antibodies which her mother would have passed on to her ready-made in the last months of pregnancy. And, besides having a very limited amount of energy, she could not suck, swallow, cry or cough.

On the third morning, Peanut had her first human milk from the city's human milk bank. Feeding was an elaborate process. Sister Murray prepared the ten cubic centimetres of milk in a specially fly-proofed milkroom. Then, because the baby could not suck or swallow, the milk had to be dripped slowly down a fine tube passed through her nose and down her throat to her stomach. Sister turned Peanut on her right side to take the milk. This helped its passage through the digestive tract and prevented any strain on the heart, which, in a child of her size, was very close to the stomach. The meal took ten minutes.

Peanut Stops Breathing

Peanut was not so well the next morning. She had now turned pale and lethargic again. Sister Murray, watching her closely, increased the oxygen and tilted her feet upwards in the incubator cradle to clear her air passages of mucus that might have collected.

Too quickly, Peanut turned from pale white to blue. At 9.30 she stopped breathing. Sister Murray spotted it immediately. She put her hand under the child's back and slowly and rhythmically lifted and lowered the chest wall, expanding the sluggish lungs. Within half a minute the child began to breathe. Two minutes passed and the breathing stopped again. Again brief artificial respiration revived her. Twice more in the next twenty minutes this happened. Sister did not take her eyes off her. After the fourth attack, she used the mucus catheter, but very little came away. The trouble lay in the lungs; they were temporarily refusing to function. Cyanosis—discoloration due to lack of oxygen—was the result.

For half an hour the baby struggled with her breathing. Her colour did not change. With unnerving suddenness, she stopped breathing again. This time she did not recover for two minutes. Sister Murray, sweating nervously, told a nurse to prepare an injection of caffeine, the respiratory stimulant. Peanut lay on the little white cradle, sucking in her diaphragm, trying desperately to get her breath. The drug had little effect. Ten minutes later came another attack. Then another, and another.

Sister Murray asked for some warm water. She sprinkled the merest drop on the baby's head. "I baptize thee," she said quietly, "in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." It was a sign of despair, but almost at once she fought it off. She told a nurse to get the equipment for giving intra-gastric oxygen. This was a last resort. Sister had not completely fixed the apparatus

JOHN BULL PHOTOGRAPHS BY ARTHUR WHITTINGTON

A crisis on the way to hospital. The child is growing purple and breathing with difficulty.

when the next attack came. She worked feverishly, but almost a minute elapsed before the oxygen began to flow.

Simultaneously, she applied artificial respiration. Two minutes passed. No sign of breathing yet . . . three minutes must have gone now . . . you can still see the pulse fluttering beneath the thin skin tissue on the ribs, so you know she is still alive . . . it must be four minutes now . . . she *must* come round . . . the oxygen *must* work . . . but she can't last. . . . Suddenly, Peanut gave a little shudder and began to breathe again.

Sister Murray persevered with the internal oxygen and artificial respiration for a while, but the baby did not collapse again. In fact, she improved quite rapidly. Her breathing strengthened, her colour returned. Only a few hours later, no one could have known how near to death she had been. The next morning she gave a wild display of vigour, even attempting to flop her arms and legs about.

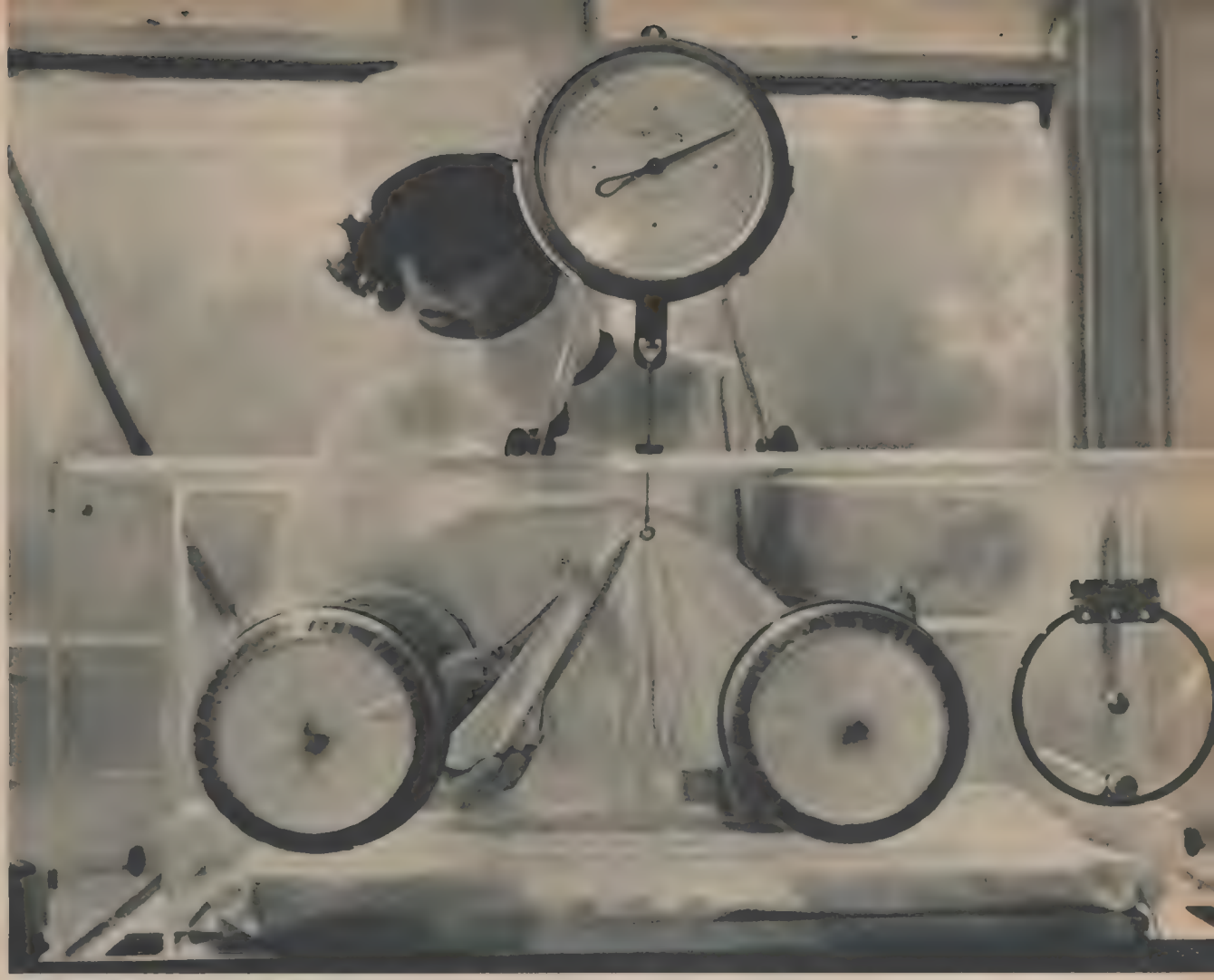
By the end of her first week, Peanut weighed one pound seven ounces, having lost seven ounces of her birth-weight. This was a perfectly normal course. Her temperature was stabilizing a little, and the cyanosis had not recurred. The next week she gradually put on weight.

Mother Gazed Enraptured

The eighteenth day was a field day; she tipped the scales at her birth-weight, and her mother was allowed to see her for the first time. Outside the ward door she stood for an hour, gazing enraptured through the glass panel at the bit of skin and bone that was hers. Hesitantly, she asked Sister Murray: "Sister, is she—complete? Is she all right?" Sister reassured her—as she has to reassure almost every mother, and doubly reassure grandmothers—that the baby had nothing missing. Right from birth, she said, Peanut had had the most exquisitely fine finger and toe nails.

The child progressed rapidly. At four weeks she weighed two pounds three ounces. The oxygen was reduced and, since she was now

Driver Monty Milton steadies the basket as midwife Elizabeth Dent uses a mucus catheter



Sister Pilgrim weighs a child in its incubator at the Sorrento Hospital. Forty thousand babies born in Britain every year are premature. In Birmingham they have the best chance of survival

capable of sucking, a bottle replaced the tube. Her food for the day increased to half a pint. Day by day, Sister Murray's hopes grew.

But, at the beginning of her sixth week, Peanut suddenly went off her food. Within a few hours she turned from pink to pale blue. Once more her breath came in that nerve-racking staccato fashion. Up went the oxygen rate. Back came the anxiety. The doctor diagnosed pneumonia. It was a reminder that with a premature baby the weakness against infection lingers for at least a year. For five days Peanut was virtually fed on penicillin. Then, as suddenly as she had sickened, she was well and kicking again.

Baby Begins To Cool Off

After that, she made "uninterrupted progress." At seven weeks and three pounds, Sister Murray began cooling her off. Peanut came out of the incubator and went into a Sorrento cot in a room at seventy degrees and humidified by a saucepan of constantly boiling water. Sister had to be careful not to cool the child too quickly. The cot was continually replenished with hot-water bottles. Beneath Peanut was an electric blanket.

At nine weeks, Peanut completed the cooling-off process, and went into a Treasure cot under normal conditions. She was then four and a half pounds. With the cotside care finished, the nurses legitimately found time to hold their little charge in their arms, a pleasant duty for the most part denied them. When the weather was fine enough, Peanut's cot went out in the hospital garden. That week, her mother picked her up for the first time.

By the fourteenth week—one week after she should have been born—Peanut was ready to go home. Three days before her discharge, her mother was admitted to the "mums' ward," on the first floor of the premature unit. Peanut's cot was brought alongside her bed, and they were taught how to live together. Sister Murray showed the mother how to feed and care for the baby. She told her that for at least a year she would have to take the most strict hygienic precautions because of the child's low resistance.

Everything connected with the baby would have to be sterilized; every time the mother wanted to touch her she would have to wash her hands. She would have to keep her stringently away from all infections, from the common cold upwards. She would have to keep her away from crowds. No one would be allowed to breathe over her, or pick her up. "The consequences of breaking these rules might be disastrous," said Sister.

Peanut weighed five pounds three ounces when her mother took her home. Because she was still within the prematurity weight, she was put under the watch of a Sorrento-trained district nurse. Her progress was "very good." At six months—which in terms of normal development was really about three—she was sitting up, with support. At eleven months, she was sitting well, standing with support, and weighing eighteen pounds. At the same time as the average normal-term baby, she went on to solid foods, and began to walk and talk. Today, she *is* a perfectly normal child.

On The Brink Of Death

Except for the unusually brief period of gestation and the correspondingly longer treatment, the features of this case are commonly found in Sister Murray's files at the Sorrento unit. In the same week that Peanut was admitted, six other premature babies joined her, simultaneously received much the same treatment, and for varying periods hovered by a breath on the brink of life and death. At any one time, twenty-six to thirty babies are in Sister Murray's care, most of them for no longer than five weeks. "In a year," she says, "about three hundred prems are admitted to the unit."

Sister Murray, who comes from County Durham, has been with the unit for eight years. She joined to take the six-month course in prematurity and liked the work so much that she stayed on. "You've got to have a solid interest in the babies to do the job," she says. "They call for a lot of patience and a lot of nursing."

Though the nursing of premature babies has reached a high peak of proficiency in Britain, research into the reasons *why* they are in such a hurry to begin living is incomplete. Out of every hundred premature babies, seventeen are multiple births, fourteen are known to be caused by toxaemia, ten by accidental haemorrhage, and a further fourteen by less common conditions. Except for "query poor diet," the other forty-five births remain unexplained.

But, says Sister Murray, "certain characteristics can be found in most of the case-histories. The babies tend to be first-born and to come from poorer families; the mothers tend to be below twenty-five and above thirty-five, and to have ignored the ante-natal clinics."

Cut Cord With Blunt Knife

On various other occasions, Nurse Dent has found a female relative cutting the umbilical cord with dirty scissors or a blunt table knife, or a group of neighbours gossiping in a bedroom while the premature infant lay on the bed still attached to its mother. The important thing about all these cases, however, is that someone at least had the common sense to call an ambulance immediately. But sometimes nobody calls.

The effects on the mother of a premature birth, either natural or otherwise, are usually negligible. "What ill-effects there are in the average case," says Sister Murray, "are largely psychological. For so many weeks, the new mother can't do the thing she most wants to do—mother her child. For a time, she does not even see the baby. On top of this, she often worries whether it's deformed."

As for the effects of prematurity on the child itself, considerable research has eliminated the "old wives' tales." At the Sorrento unit, growth charts frequently show the babies following the curve that would have been drawn had they remained in the womb for the full term. Rarely is a premature baby's size much below average at the fortieth week after conception. It is generally agreed, however, that a premature child is weaker than his full-term brother until he reaches four years of age. After that, there is little between them. THE END

THE SMUGGLER ON FLIGHT 920

by H. P. WATTS

ILLUSTRATED BY CHARLES WOOD

He was a wanted man—but only she knew it. And if he saved her life, how could she betray him?

HIGH ABOVE THE EARTH, the airliner looked clean and young and utterly free. From below it was no more than a silver speck, a drone in the sky, an accustomed noise, so that even the native cattle disregarded it completely.

Two hours previously the passengers on Flight 920 had climbed aboard, and it had swept away from the airport. Now there was nothing to stay its progress; only the empty air that the four engines blew contemptuously away in the slipstream. But for the crew the great aircraft was caught on a prescribed arc, an arrow flight drawn as a thin line across the chart. For them there was no freedom. They were 15,000 feet up, but the radio held them in crossed beams. The gyro-compass shaped their path. They could do no more than wait from the tepid baths of one airport to the same at the next. . . .

The wireless began to chatter softly, and the operator's pencil moved automatically across the pad. He gave a perfunctory buzz or two as the message ended. He timed the message and leaned back on his seat to squint at it with interest. Then he got up and took it to the pilot.

"Here you are, skipper," he said. "It seems we've got a Crippen aboard. Wonderful what the wireless can do nowadays. Can't call your soul your own."

The captain of the plane propped the pad on his knees and frowned as he read: SUSPECT YOU HAVE GOLD SMUGGLER ABOARD STOP HEIGHT SIX FEET STOP DARK HAIR AND COMPLEXION AGE THIRTY STOP TRAVELLING UNDER NAME OF MATTHEWS STOP BELIEVED CARRYING GOLD BAR STOP POLICE WILL MEET YOU ON ARRIVAL STOP.

The captain grunted and pressed the buzzer for the stewardess. When she came, the slouch went out of the wireless operator's back, and the co-pilot straightened his tie. That was the effect Mary Atkins had. She was fair and sleek and lovely, but she was something more than that, too. She was not just a girl to pick out in a crowd, to take home from a dance. There was more behind the clear blue eyes and beneath the soft fair hair than that. As the wireless operator had once remarked, "She's someone's for keeps, and it ain't me, I'm afraid."

"Mary." The captain handed her the pad as she stood at his side. "Check the passenger-list and see if we have this joker, will you? Just a casual glance will do. Let me know where he's sitting and where his luggage is."

"Yes, sir," Mary said.

She slipped away. The wireless operator sighed and went back to the prosaic routine of his job.

MARY was quickly back with the passenger-list in her hand and a few scribbled notes on a pad.

"He's there, sir," she said. She looked at the list. "Mr. John R. Matthews, number twenty on the starboard side. He doesn't seem to have any luggage, but he's wearing a heavy overcoat, and he might have anything in that."

The captain nodded. "What's he look like? Tough type?"

Mary hesitated. "Not exactly tough," she said. She tapped her pencil against her teeth. How could she describe the tilt of a hat, the slant of a cigarette, a skull-and-crossbones air? "He's a bit piratical, perhaps. And he looks as though he couldn't care less."

"He won't have to," the captain said shortly. "The moment we touch down there'll be people to look after things for him. No bother at all."

The plane flew on, smoothly, effortlessly, still caught on its prescribed arc. Then, suddenly, there was trouble—trouble that came swiftly and that no one could avoid. The plane didn't catch fire, didn't explode. It simply took sick and died up there at 15,000 feet, died engine by engine as the fuel was choked off. Like a spent arrow its nose dropped, and it began a long glide to the green mat of the jungle below.

The man known as John Matthews was the first of the passengers to realize what was happening. He sat tense, grasping the back of the seat in front of him, conscious of the tilt of the aircraft and the muted, high whine of the engines.

Then the other passengers began to be aware something was wrong. One of the women half rose in her seat in the beginnings of panic. Matthews's glance flickered briefly across at her, then focused on the door of the crew's cabin as it opened and Mary came through.

"Fasten your safety-belts, please," Mary said. "We may be going to land. Fasten your belts quickly, please."

She moved down the aisle, gently pressing down the woman who was still half out of her

The three men leaped away from Matthews as

Suddenly, all life went out of the plane. It slashed through the treetops and plunged down

though they'd been stung. They stood gaping at the gun in Mary's hand, completely bewildered. "Let him alone," she ordered. "Let him alone or I'll shoot"

seat. She approached Matthews, and her eyes momentarily met his. He was smiling faintly, and at once she was grateful to him, because she knew that here was strength and self-control.

Then she was past him, helping the man behind unravel the cat's-cradle he had made of his safety-belt.

"There's no need to worry," Mary said, for the benefit of everyone in the cabin. Her voice was smooth and steady, but her smile was just a little too set. "Captain Selwyn is a pilot of the very greatest experience."

Now the plane was no longer a thing of mechanical beauty sailing above the earth. It was no longer a disc that moved regularly on a distant chart, an arrival time on a destination board. Now it was only a polished cylinder dropping out of the sky, with the forest curving up to meet it, the horizon rising and shrinking about it like a circling noose.

FOR a moment or two the great aircraft skimmed across the greedy tree-tops, as if the pilot was holding it up by his own sheer strength.

Then the life went out of the plane. Plunging down, it slashed its way through the tree-tops. The saplings bent and whipped as it sliced its way through.

In an instant the airliner's wings were shorn off, and there was a final devastating crash as the fuselage seared along the ground and buried its nose like a spent shell.

The silence which followed was shocked and frightened, as though every living creature had been stunned by the concussion.

When the metal had ceased falling from the trees, and the branches straightened themselves out again, the passengers crawled out through the split silver skin of the fuselage. There were four dead, the pilot and all his crew except the stewardess, who now lay near the wreck with a broken leg.

The passengers were bruised, cut and half-stunned. But they could stand and walk, and they stood now in a bewildered, helpless group round the stewardess. All of them except Matthews, who was crawling and tapping his way round the front of the aircraft.

Presently he came back. He stood wiping his hands in a matter of fact sort of way, regarding the group with an air of command.

"All dead," he announced. "Didn't know much about it, either. And there's nothing we can do for them. Nothing." There was a certainty and finality in his tone that suggested this wasn't by any means the first time he had witnessed violent death.

"So we've got to think of ourselves now," Matthews said. "And that means getting ourselves out of this hole as fast as we can."

The others looked at him, amazed, stupefied, with the din of the crash still echoing in their heads. "Get out?" It was an elderly woman who spoke. "Why, where can we go?"

The reply came not to her but to the whole group.

"We'll take a direction," Matthews said. "North is probably our best bet. We'll go north until we strike a village or settlement of some sort."

"But we might be a hundred miles from anywhere," someone said.

"Then we've got a hundred-mile walk in front of us," Matthews said dryly. He waved a hand at the surrounding jungle. "No one's going to find us in this lot. It's up to us."

BRISKLY he walked over to where Mary was lying awkwardly on a pile of coats, her face white and bleak with pain. "Can you tell us what sort of supplies we have in the aircraft, always supposing we can get at them?"

Mary managed to smile faintly up at him, although her eyes were frightened and she was shivering. "There's a complete medical kit in the galley," she said. "And tinned food, coffee and so on. Enough for one day's good meals, if it hasn't been smashed up. Some spirits, too. Whisky and brandy."

Matthews nodded and straightened up. He looked round at the passengers. Three women, eight men, he said to himself. Then, aloud, "Right—let's get organized."

It took them two hours to assemble what

Matthews himself took the first watch. Gun in hand, he sat alert and wakeful beside Mary's litter

supplies they could find and make a rough litter for Mary. Matthews was the driving force behind everything that was done. And Mary, lying patiently waiting, sometimes following Matthews with her eyes, thought about the wireless message about this man and wondered constantly where her duty lay; wondered what would happen if she were to announce to this group of shock-stunned people that they had a criminal in their midst.

She was still wondering about it when Matthews called the others round the place where she lay. Matthews had found the spirits in the plane, and now he was doling out a tot of brandy for everyone.

"One for the road," he said, and there was a bleak gleam of humour in his eyes.

Some of the women coughed and spluttered over the liquor, but all felt better for it. It took the glaze from their eyes and numbed the shock. And for the first time they began to regard the forest as a barrier to be penetrated. They had begun to hope. They lit cigarettes and smiled wanly at each other.

"Now let's go," Matthews said curtly.

The first bearers took up the litter. Mary closed her eyes at the pain in her leg as she was lifted. The party filed slowly out of the clearing. In a minute the forest had swallowed them.

They made about three miles before the shadows in the forest thickened swiftly into night. They had not come upon anything resembling a path. They camped for the night at the foot of a great tree.

Already personalities were emerging. There was the young actor named Sheringham who moved beautifully even when he had to shoulder the litter, but who never managed to do anything constructive. There was the elderly woman still jittery with shock, and another who looked as though she would need a litter herself before long. There were two men, Cousins and Parker, who tramped with a resigned stoicism and looked after themselves completely.

There was trouble when they camped, trouble over the drink. They had eaten a meal of bread and biscuit and a little tinned meat, with water to drink, when the actor stood up and said casually that he thought he'd have a nightcap before he turned in.

At that, several of the men brightened up considerably.

"Sure—eat, drink and be merry, eh?" said the man called Cousins. And he moved over towards the case containing the bottles of spirits.

Matthews allowed him half a dozen steps before he shouted: "Leave the stuff alone. It's for medical use only. Leave it alone."

Cousins grinned. It was an unpleasant grin. "Save your breath, chum," he said. "I always sleep better with a drink or two under my belt." And he took a further step forward.

"Leave it," Matthews said again. And this time Cousins stopped. Matthews had drawn a gun, not suddenly or violently as a gangster draws, but casually and with deliberation.

For a moment Cousins and the gun stared eye to eye. Then he turned and edged back towards Parker at the edge of the clearing.

"O.K.," he called back to Matthews. "You win so far. . . ."

No one slept very much that night, Matthews least of all. Next day they covered about ten miles. The heat was terrific, and at first the going was as tangled and difficult as ever. Then they came upon an old track, and for a while the relief was as though they were treading city pavements again. But then midday heat choked down on them, and there was a fresh outburst of trouble.

They had been resting in the steaming shade, exhausted. They slumped like rag puppets, and for half an hour no one spoke. Then Cousins and Parker and another of the men, after some muttered, furtive talk, went over to where Matthews was squatting beside Mary's litter.

"Look here, Chief." It was Cousins again, acting as spokesman. "The three of us here want to push on. And when you come to think of it, it's the sensible thing to do."

Cousins paused, licked his lips, and tried to look Matthews in the face. "Suppose you give us a share of the grub and let us get moving. We can double the pace and get help for the rest all the sooner. What d'you say?"

Matthews sat looking up at the three of them. His face was drained a dirty white, but his eyes were still as sharp and dangerous as ever.

"No," he said. "We're going to need more porters from now on. Look over there." He nodded in the direction of a woman lying with her head propped on the baggage, her face tightened in despair.

The three stared at her for a moment. Then the man who had joined forces with Cousins and Parker burst out viciously: "What the hell! Do we all have to die, just because a bunch of women can't look lively?" He swung savagely round upon Matthews. "You can be a dead hero if you like, but I say it's every man for himself, and we're going!"

The other two growled agreement. The three of them turned and moved off. They picked up their baggage and started off along the track.

Matthews grinned sardonically. And Mary stifled her hand into her mouth as he drew his gun. He fired only once. Between Cousins and Parker the dirt spurted suddenly. The three men stopped, shocked by the report.

"I'll shoot the next one that tries to get away," Matthews said. "And it'll be no more murder than if you leave us here. Now help make another stretcher, and hurry."

There was no mercy in Matthews's voice. He was justice, ruthless and uncompromising. And he still had the gun.

The second stretcher took longer to build. The company was exhausted and listless, and Matthews did most of the work. The heat was so punishing that he had at last to strip off the overcoat he had worn ever since boarding the plane. He took it over to Mary.

"I'm going to leave my coat with you," he said. "Just for safety. Keep your hand on it, will you? If anyone touches it or even gets near it, just you yell."

Mary looked up at him and nodded. "I'll do that," she said. She was smiling. And the grim line of his mouth softened as he looked down.

"You're a good girl," he said. He bent down

Continued on page 36

The Saint in Europe

SEE PAGE 20

It pays John Slater to live at top speed

by WILFRED GREATOREX

He did unwanted encores when he was four. He gate-crashed his hectic way into show business. Now, fast talking as ever, he tells incredible stories on TV

SITTING IN the producer's box of Studio H at Lime Grove, Rex Tucker took a closer and anxious look at the picture on his television monitor. Viewers watching his children's hour programme about the sculptor Cellini, *The Florentine Bronze*, saw nothing amiss as smoke poured from a "prop" furnace. But in fact, flash powder being used for effects had ignited a ball of paper painted to look like pewter, and technicians were at that moment vainly trying to get close enough to the blaze to put it out.

The furnace was made of wood, and Tucker was urgently informed that it looked like going up. "There was the choice of fading at the most exciting part of the story," he recalls, "or setting the studio on fire." He had just decided on the first course when the actor playing Cellini, a quick-witted cockney with high cheekbones and a lean and hungry look, began stoking the furnace. As this was not in the script, Tucker rightly interpreted it as an impromptu act of firefighting.

The actor, John Slater, pushed the fireball far enough for the studio hands, out of camera shot, to douse it with extinguishers. "He saved the show," says Tucker, "but the most amazing thing was that he kept up a running ad-lib right through the crisis."

A hearty extrovert of thirty-six, with big brown eyes, a surprised face rutted with deep lines, and a salesman's tongue, Slater is well-practised in the complementary arts of ad-libbing and meeting trouble halfway.

He talked his way into paid acting one summer afternoon in 1937, after turning up uninvited for a commercial radio audition. "When the receptionist couldn't find his name listed," says a friend, "he got on his high horse and convinced her that her employers were responsible for a serious oversight."

With lessening resistance and more pay, Basil John Slater has been gate-crashing the film industry, the B.B.C. and the West End theatre ever since. For a year, until last June, he was starring as a boisterous sergeant in *Reluctant Heroes* at the Whitehall Theatre, London, fitting in as best he could a variety of other commitments.

These together provided an income that was high even by West End standards. According to his secretary, Ann Moss, it could have been considerably higher. "He is hopeless where money is concerned," she says, "and sometimes seems to think of himself as a charitable institution."

This inconsequential attitude to money and other worldly matters, his friends agree, has had

A distinct family resemblance here. . . . Two wide grins as John Slater joins in the fun with his younger son, Simon, at their home in Finchley

much to do with Slater's recent rise as a television storyteller—he was voted actor of the year in the *Daily Mail* television awards for 1952. "Fate has played such a big part in his life," says one well-known producer, "that to John anything is credible—and his stories are told from that point of view. And when you've gone through what he's gone through, a camera isn't frightening any more."

As a boy, Slater was twice seriously ill with rheumatic fever; and in September, 1946, he and his wife Betty were badly smashed and burned in an air crash at Le Bourget in which twenty-two people were killed. Slater still carries the scars of that accident, and he has a leaking heart valve as a legacy of his childhood illnesses.

"He could have been an invalid," says one of his closest friends. "Instead, he lives at a cracking pace and squeezes more out of a day than any man I know." Sometimes he astonishes even his best friends with his candour and bounce. Once he astonished a famous film director.

When Gabriel Pascal was lavishly casting *Caesar And Cleopatra* some years ago, he had the almost unheard-of experience of being told by Slater, who was then completely unknown, that the part offered was unsuitable. "And what," asked the director, "would you have liked to play?"

"Apollodorus," came the reply.

"Why?"

"He was a commercial traveller," said Slater, impudently, "and I'm sure I've been a commercial traveller longer than anyone else in film business."

As it turned out, Slater's refusal cost him £4,000 worth of work—"expensive independence." In his irreverent career, however, he has never been unemployed or even underemployed, a circumstance which, on at least one occasion, owed more to his salesmanship than to his acting abilities. One morning, he arrived at Elstree film studios in a chauffeur-driven saloon belonging to his father-in-law.

"It was the best way I could think of to get past the commissionaire," he recalls. "I knew that once inside I could fix something."

His self-confidence can be disarming. During *The Florentine Bronze* final rehearsal, actors were making their entrances in one scene carrying pewter objects for melting. Suddenly, Slater appeared with a metal bath on his back. "It was a real Victorian monstrosity," recalls Rex Tucker. "We hadn't even got round to research on whether they had pewter baths in sixteenth-century Florence." Nevertheless, the episode was kept in. Next day, Freda Lingstrom, head of children's television, asked Tucker to cut it from the repeat programme.

He Altered Shakespeare

Slater, who is noted for being carried away by bright ideas at rehearsal, takes easily to such curbs on his dramatic excesses. "I've never found him difficult for all his bluster," says Douglas Moodie, who has produced most of Slater's television programmes. "Even after a successful Shakespeare season at Stratford, he put on no airs or graces."

But Slater can be blisteringly casual. Going through his *Reluctant Heroes* rôle one morning, he was told by Brian Rix, the actor-manager, that he was turning some of the lines round. "I know," Slater bellowed from the stage. "I've done the same with Shakespeare."

At one *Othello* matinée at Stratford, Slater was fascinated by the vibrations of a sword that whanged into the stage during the battle scene between Roderigo and Cassio. "I lost my lines completely," he admits now. "I ad-libbed furiously." He was conscious of a rustle of pages "as little girls turned back their Shakespeare to see if what I was saying was authentic."

Momentary lapses of this sort do not disturb him. "He's not the worrying kind," says Betty Slater. "I've known him low-spirited only once in years." He had got a part as a saboteur in a film called *Against The Wind*, when a studio official telephoned to say he would have to have a medical examination next morning.

Slater was convinced that his heart weakness would lose him the job. He brooded in an armchair into the early hours. The doctor, however, was interested only in the state of his left leg, broken in the air crash, on which he was still wearing an iron support. Slater satisfied the doctor and shortly afterwards made a parachute jump from a sixty-foot tower.

Two Doctors Said "No"

Today, his main regret is that he is uninsurable and has to make financial provision against future risks out of savings. But he refuses to accept limitations on his physical effort. He rises early, takes long walks and indulges in riotous games with his two sons, Roger, aged nine and Simon, four.

A few hours after getting back from location in Italy on a film entitled *The Star Of India*, some weeks ago, he turned out with the Stage Eleven in a cricket match. "He needs an awful lot of persuading to ease up even a little bit," says Betty. "As soon as he drops one thing he starts another just as energetic."

His doctor advised him against taking the exhausting sergeant's rôle from which Wally Patch had retired in *Reluctant Heroes*. But he insisted on going through with the part and held it for more than a year until Betty called in a second opinion. It corroborated the first and Slater reluctantly left the show last June.

Only his obstinacy kept him going at Stratford once, when he played Bottom with a temperature of 104. He had tonsillitis. And the following night he insisted on playing in *Macbeth*. He went on "loaded with penicillin injections."

He agrees now that long runs in the West End are not the best way of giving his heart a chance. Nevertheless, his family are not convinced that he is really ready to slow the pace. He keeps a tight diary, likes meeting people all day long and often works a fifteen-hour day.

On a recent Tuesday he made two recordings, a film test and a children's hour show on television, and then had barely enough time to reach the theatre in time for his nightly stint. "A police car very kindly escorted me," he says. "It was a near thing."

Slater is on first-name terms not only with many London policemen but with the majority of the West End barrowboys. A few days after the Coronation, he settled an argument between a policeman and a barrowboy by getting them to help him to drive through the crowds of sightseers near Trafalgar Square. "He's not the bobbysoxers' idea of a star," says one acquaintance, "but the barrowboys think the world of him."

Sometimes he stands talking for half an hour at street corners with the barrowboys. They are the source and the characters of many of his stories, which are usually about ordinary people in extraordinary circumstances. Once he has the gist of a tale, he broods over it for weeks and often months before getting it down in pencil on the backs of old radio scripts.

He rehearses on six-mile walks over the Totteridge fields near his home at North Finchley. "He always takes Cleopatra, his six-year-old Boxer dog," says Betty, "and calls at three pubs on the way. People used to tell

The star stops for a chat with the housewife.

Slater often works a fifteen-hour day, but he always finds time to tell one of his stories to young Simon. Looking on are his wife Betty—and Cleo

JOHN BULL PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAWRENCE HANLEY

John Slater has many friends in Chapel Street market. He is known, too, by most London barrowboys

me they had seen my husband talking to himself. Now they've got used to it."

By the time Slater returns from his walk, the story is usually clear in his mind. He prefers to tell his own stories because he must be word-perfect on television and yet appear to be talking off-the-cuff. "I don't want nice, rounded sentences," he explains. "A story written that way is absolutely no use to me at all."

He puts over his tales with dramatic gestures and a wide range of facial expressions. He also gets in similies which, according to one B.B.C. producer, are the nearest television has got to surrealism. Once he spoke of "gravestones like peeled ice-creams"—a literary Picassoism which he had to explain to a puzzled studio manager. "Have you ever," asked Slater, "bought a threepenny ice wrapped in paper?"

Wouldn't Leave The Stage

During his Saturday night serial, *Apples A Pound Pears*, he referred to "plugs on a switchboard like a gallery full of pigtailed schoolgirls"; an echo to that *Othello* matinée when he forgot his lines.

John Slater has been acting since he was four. Born to Len and Olga Slater in Gray's Inn Road, where they still keep a secondhand shop called The Odd Spot, he grew up with cockney kids as playmates and made his first appearance on any stage at Middleton Square convent in a Christmas concert. "He finished his turn," recalls his mother, "and then caused some confusion by coming back with every other act to do a series of unwanted encores."

This unashamed stage-hogging was not then taken as an omen, for Slater showed real ability at sports until laid low with rheumatic fever. In bed for two years, he spent most of his time reading and being read to. "By the time he was eleven," says Len Slater, "I had read every word of Dickens to him—and a bit of Shakespeare."

Slater appeared later in every school play and concert put on at St. Clement's of the Strand. At fourteen he took part in a debate in which he was Macbeth's defence counsel. "He would have got the fellow cleared in any British court," says his father. "His schoolmaster was most impressed."

From this performance it was assumed he would become a lawyer. "He was intended for the Bar," says a recent publicity piece on Slater, "but had his own ideas." In fact, he tried hard to achieve this aim, but could not get his matriculation. Four years in succession he failed in Latin and mathematics. Finally, his parents paid for extra lessons from a private tutor. "But," says Olga Slater, "we found that John had made a pact with him. Instead of having lessons they were going up west for dinners on the fees." So the Bar idea was given up when Slater was nearly twenty; he left school and got a job with a London export agent, D. L. Gould.

"He came in like a bomb," recalls a former colleague, Wilson Hunt. "He thought nothing of charging in to the old man in his shirt-sleeves . . . a real heresy in those days. I had to tell him off." Soon Slater was getting regular commercial radio parts, and Hunt covered up while he was away from the office. "He was bold as brass," says Hunt. "There was always something happening when he was around."

By late 1937 Slater was a full-time actor, playing in a radio series on Jack Oakie, and a succession of plays. When war came he tried to get into the R.A.F., but was medically unfit. The army also turned him down. "He tried to become an ambulance driver," says a friend, "but again they rejected him. It hurt him, but he kept his bounce." He began making a series of Services' instructional films.

Arrested For Not Saluting

"I was the sprog who knew nothing but was willing to learn," he says "I could never be mistaken for anything above a lance-corporal with my looks—that's probably why I was chosen."

Once, working on a film about the navy's switch from asdic to radar, Slater was arrested and "slapped in the brig" at Campbeltown in Scotland for not saluting a rear-admiral. The manager of the film unit eventually had him freed, and the actors took to wearing red vaccination ribbons on their sleeves as a cautionary sign that they were not genuine sailors.

Slater worked on films in the Channel, the Atlantic, and in the air. His most tedious job, he says, was to crawl "for three whole days" along a film studio floor at Wembley for an infantry film on digging-in.

In feature films and plays, as well as propaganda pictures, Slater played in-the-ranks characters—a seaman in *For Those In Peril*, a blinded soldier in a play about El Alamein called *Happy Few*, a sergeant in *The Shouting Dies*. As a contrast he later appeared in *Don Juan In Hell*. He played what one dramatic critic mischievously called "a most understanding devil."

Even after the war, Slater kept up his documentary film-work; and at the time of the air crash he was making an Air Ministry "short" on firefighting in aircraft. He saved Betty's life on that occasion. Although they were both thrown clear, she was still strapped to her seat close to the blazing machine. Slater crawled to her, unfastened the strap and dragged her farther away. As he did so, a petrol tank went up and they were both severely burned.

Thought He Had Failed

It was in a chance meeting with another actor, soon after he left hospital, that Slater learned that the B.B.C. were looking for a story-teller. He promptly telephoned Alexandra Palace and the following week took an audition. He heard nothing for three months and assumed he had failed.

At a Sunday afternoon cricket match, however, he met a producer's secretary who recalled the audition. "I can't have been very good," said Slater. But the girl assured him that he had entirely pleased the producer. That night Slater wrote "a very rude letter" to the B.B.C. Two days later he was asked if he could tell a story on television at short notice. He could—and he appeared in an afternoon programme for women.

Slater lives in an older-type semi-detached house with Betty and their two sons. He gets little time at home. He likes meeting contacts in West End pubs for lunch, and often makes more appointments than his secretary thinks it possible for him to fit in. "He never worries," she says. "But somehow things seem to come out right." THE END

The Saint in Europe

SEE PAGE 20

HORNBLOWER OF THE ATROPOS

by C. S. FORESTER

ILLUSTRATED BY WILLIAM LITTLE

The gold was there, certainly, but the divers couldn't get at it. Hornblower, sensing danger, knew there was no time to be lost. The wreck must be blown up

ON BOARD H.M.S. ATROPOS, off the Turkish coast, a man lay recovering from a critical operation. His name was McCullum, and he had been shot in a duel by the ship's surgeon. The surgeon, a German called Eisenbeiss, had been forced to save his opponent's life.

Horatio Hornblower, captain of the Atropos, had never liked the pompous, unruly Eisenbeiss: he had only taken him aboard under the King's orders, for Eisenbeiss was Chamberlain to the young Prince of Seitz-Bunau, the King's nephew, who was serving in Atropos as midshipman.

Hornblower had the task of raising a quarter of a million pounds in gold and silver from the sunken wreck of H.M.S. Speedwell, in Marmorice Bay, Turkey. McCullum was his salvage expert: if he had died, the expedition might have been a ghastly failure.

There was still no guarantee of success, but they had located the wreck, and opened good trading relations with the mudir, the local headman. Now they were ready to dive. Shivering with cold, Looney, one of McCullum's Ceylonese divers, sat on the gunwale of a small boat over the wreck. Then, hugging a huge cannon ball as ballast, he slid into the water.

PART 5

Three-minute Dive

TAKING out his watch—it had no second-hand, for watches with second-hands were far too expensive for him to afford—Hornblower could measure the time roughly. He

They heard the muffled roar of an explosion, and the launch rocked violently. Hornblower swung round to see a huge wave coming straight at them

watched the tip of the minute hand creep from one mark to the next, from there to the next, and into the third minute. He was concentrating so deeply on the task that he did not hear Looney break water; his attention was called by a word from Leadbitter. Looney's head was visible twenty yards astern, his long, thick switch of black hair tied with a string beside his ear.

"Back water!" said Hornblower promptly. "Pay out that line, there!"

The second order was understood clearly enough by the Ceylonese, or at least they knew their business, for as a vigorous stroke or two sent the gig down to Looney one of them attended to the line over the bows. Looney put his hands up to the gunwale and the other two pulled him on board. They talked volubly, but Looney at first sat still on the thwart, his head down by his thighs. Then he lifted his head, the water streaming from his wet hair. Clearly he talked about the cold—that sharp breeze must have been icy upon his wet skin—for the others towelled him and assisted him to cover himself with his clothes.

Hornblower wondered how he would set them to work again, but there was no need for him to interfere. As soon as Looney had his white garments about his shoulders he stood up in the bows of the gig and looked about him, considering. Then he pointed to a spot in the water a few yards away, looking round at Hornblower.

"Give way!" said Hornblower.

One of the Ceylonese hauled in on the grapnel and let it go again when the boat reached the spot indicated. Now it was his turn to strip, to inflate and deflate his chest, and to take a cannon-ball into his hands and drop over the side. Cannon-balls cost money, thought Hornblower, and a time might come when he would need them to fire at the enemy. It would be better in future to lay in a supply of small rocks gathered on the shore.

At length the diver came up to the surface and scrambled on board, to be received by his companions as Looney had been. There was some kind of discussion among the divers, which was ended by the third one going down in the same place, apparently to settle the point in dispute. What he discovered led, on his return, to Looney requesting by signs a further shifting of the gig, and then Looney took off his clothes again to go down.

The divers were working industriously and, as far as Hornblower could see, intelligently. Later on, Looney and one of his mates made a simultaneous descent, and it was on this occasion that Hornblower noticed that Looney's legs and feet, when he climbed in, were scratched and bleeding. For a moment, Hornblower thought of sharks and similar underwater perils, but he revised his opinion at once. Looney must have been scrambling about on the wreck itself. There were decaying timbers down there, deep in the bright water, overgrown with barnacles and razor-edged seashells. Hornblower felt confirmed in his opinion when Looney desired to buoy this particular spot. They anchored a plank there by a grapnel, and then dived more than once again in the neighbourhood.

Now the divers were exhausted, lying doubled up and huddled together beside the bow thwart.

"Very well, Looney," said Hornblower, and he pointed back to the ship.

Looney gave him a weary nod.

"Up anchor," ordered Hornblower, and the gig pulled back towards Atropos.

A mile away were visible the lug sails of longboat and launch, also on their return journey, coming down with the freshening wind abeam.

It seemed to Hornblower as if things could never happen to him one at a time; he had hardly set foot on the deck of the Atropos before they were running alongside, and as the

Hornblower said carefully: "Tell him I'd rather have the money." And as the interpreter spoke, he watched the mudir. The old man was stroking his beard, an expression of dismay on his face

Ceylonese made their weary way forward to report to McCullum, here were Carslake and Turner demanding his attention.

"The water casks are refilled, sir," said Carslake. "I used the little stream that comes in half a mile from the town. I thought that would be better than those in the town."

"Quite right, Mr. Carslake," said Hornblower. "What stores did you get?"

"Very little, sir, today, I'm afraid."

"There was only the local market, sir," supplemented Turner. "The mudir has only sent out word today. The goods will be coming in for sale tomorrow."

"The mudir?" asked Hornblower. That was the word Turner had used before.

"The headman, sir, the local governor. The old man with the sword who came out to us in the boat yesterday."

"And he is the mudir?"

"Yes, sir. The mudir is under the kaimakam, and the kaimakam is under the vali, and the vali is under the grand vizier, and he's under the sultan, or at least that's how it's supposed to be—all of 'em try to be independent when they get the chance."

"I understand that," said Hornblower. He turned back to Carslake to listen patiently first to his account of what had been bought and what would be available later.

"I bought all the eggs there were, sir. Two and a half dozen," said Carslake, in the course of his report.

"Good," said Hornblower, but without any

fervour, and that was clear proof that his mind was not on what Carslake was saying. Normally the thought of eggs, boiled, scrambled or poached, would have excited him. The untoward events at Malta had prevented his buying any there for himself. He had not even laid in a store of pickled eggs at Deptford.

Carslake droned himself to a stop.

"Thank you, Mr. Carslake," said Hornblower. "Mr. Turner, come below and I'll hear what you have to say."

Turner had apparently kept his eyes and ears open, as Hornblower had ordered him to.

"The mudir has no force here at all worth mentioning, sir," said Turner, his wizened old face animated and lively. "I doubt if he could raise twenty-five armed men all told. He came down with two guards as old as himself."

"You spoke with him?"

"Yes, sir. I gave him—Mr. Carslake and I gave him—ten guineas to open the market for us. Another ten guineas tomorrow is what we've promised him."

No harm in keeping local authority on his side as long as possible, thought Hornblower.

"And was he friendly?" he asked.

"We-ell, sir, I wouldn't say that, not exactly, sir. Maybe it was because he wanted our money. I wouldn't call him friendly, sir."

He would be reserved and cautious, Hornblower decided, not anxious to commit himself without instructions from superior authority, and yet not averse to pocketing twenty pieces of gold—pickings for an average year, Hornblower guessed—when the opportunity presented itself.

"The vali's carried off the local army, sir," went on Turner. "That was plain enough from the way the mudir talked. But I don't know why, sir. Maybe there's trouble with the Greeks again. There's always trouble in the Archipelago."

Rebellion was endemic among the Greek subjects of Turkey. Fire and sword, massacre and desolation, piracy and revolt, swept islands and mainland periodically.

"One point's clear, anyway," said Hornblower, "and that is that the vali's not here at present."

"That's so, sir."

It would take time for a message to reach the vali, or even the vali's subordinate, the kaimakam, decided Hornblower, fishing the strange title out of his memory with an effort.

The political situation was involved beyond any simple disentanglement. Turkey had been Britain's enthusiastic ally recently, when Bonaparte had conquered Egypt and invaded Syria and threatened Constantinople. But Russia and Turkey were chronic enemies—they had fought half a dozen wars in the last half-century—and now Russia and England were allies, and Russia and France were enemies, even though since Austerlitz there was no way in which they could attack each other.

The tottering Turkish Government would seize any opportunity to play off one possible enemy against the other, and would view with the deepest suspicion any British activity amid Turkish possessions. With England and France locked in a death-struggle, the Turks could hardly be blamed if they suspected England of buying Russia's continued alliance with a promise of a slice of Turkish territory; luckily, France, with a far worse record, was liable to be similarly suspected.

When the sultan heard—if ever he did hear—of the presence of a British ship of war in Marmorice Bay, he would wonder what intrigues were brewing with the vali, and if the sultan or vali heard that a quarter of a million in gold and silver lay at the bottom of Marmorice Bay, it could be taken for granted that none would be salvaged unless the lion's share went into Turkish hands.

There was just no conclusion to be reached after all this debate, except for the one he had reached a week ago, and that was to effect as prompt a recovery of the treasure as possible and to leave the diplomats to argue over a *fait accompli*. He walked forward to hear from McCullum's lips how much had been learned regarding this possibility.

McCullum had just finished hearing what the divers had reported to him. They were squatting round his cot, with all the attention of their big eyes concentrated on his face, and with all their clothes draped about them until they looked something like beehives.

"She is there," said McCullum. Apparently he had been quite prepared to find that some gross blunder or other had been committed.

"I'm glad to hear it," replied Hornblower.

"She's greatly overgrown, except for her copper, but she shows no sign of breaking up at all."

A wooden ship, fastened together with wooden pegs, and untouched by storm or current, might well lie for ever on a sandy bed without disintegration.

"Did she right herself?" asked Hornblower.

"No. She's nearly bottom-up. My men could tell bow from stern."

"That's fortunate," said Hornblower.

McCullum referred to some pages of written notes that he held in his free hand. "The money was in the lower lazarette, aft, abaft the mizzen-mast and immediately below the main deck. A ton and a half of coined gold in iron chests and nearly four tons of coined silver in bags."

"Ye-es," said Hornblower, trying to look as if that exactly agreed with his own calculations.

"The lazarette was given an additional lining of oak to strengthen it before the treasure was put on board," went on McCullum. "I expect the money's still there."

"You mean . . . ?" asked Hornblower, quite at a loss.

"I mean it will not have fallen through the deck on to the sea-bottom," said McCullum, condescending to explain to this ignorant amateur.

"Of course," said Hornblower, hastily.

"Speedwell's main cargo was half the battering train of the army," went on McCullum. "Ten long eighteen-pounders. Bronze guns. And the shot for them. Iron shot."

"That's why she went down the way she did," said Hornblower brightly. As he spoke, he realized, as well, the implications of the words "bronze" and "iron" which McCullum had accented. Bronze would endure under water longer than iron.

"Yes," said McCullum. "As soon as she heeled, guns and shot and all would shift. I'll wager on that, from what I know of first mates in these days. With the war, any jumped-up apprentice is a first mate."

"I've seen it myself," said Hornblower sorrowfully.

"But that's neither here nor there," went on McCullum. "Looney here says she is still, most of her, above the sand. He could get in under the break of the poop, just."

"Yes?" said Hornblower tentatively.

"Do you think they can break in through the ship's side with crowbars?" asked McCullum testily. "Five minutes' work on the bottom a day each for three men! We'd be here a year."

Hornblower suddenly remembered the "leather fuse-hoses" for which McCullum had indented at Malta. "You're going to blow up the wreck?" he said.

"Of course. A powder-charge in that angle should open the ship at exactly the right place."

"Naturally," said Hornblower. He was dimly aware that it was possible to explode charges under water, but his knowledge of the technical methods to be employed was dimmer still.

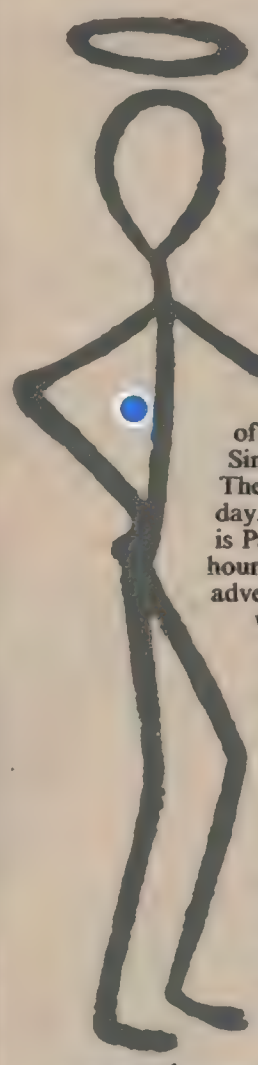
"We'll try the fuse-hoses first," announced McCullum. "But I've little hope of them at that depth. The joints can't resist the pressure."

"I suppose not," said Hornblower.

"I expect it'll mean a flying fuse in the

Continued on page 40

The Saint in Europe



NEXT WEEK we publish the second of our great fiction supplements. It is *The Saint In Europe*, by Leslie Charteris—a completely new, unpublished trio of episodes in the life of the gay adventurer. Simon Templar, alias The Saint, is on holiday, and his first stop is Paris. Within a few hours of his arrival, adventure comes his way—a gruesome murder in the Bois de Boulogne, a beautiful girl in danger. With a glint of mischief in his eye, the Saint steps in. . . .

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JOHN BULL NEXT WEEK

Headhunter chief Peruche (right) with his son and Lewis Cotlow. His comical hat—from Cotlow—proved a sensational gift. He wore it till he died

AMAZON HEADHUNTERS (3) *by LEWIS COTLOW*

I meet a killer with a heart of gold

Peruche's friendliness warmed my heart. But he was not a man to trifle with. He was a mighty chief who had taken many heads—and was smart enough to live to seventy without losing his own

DARKNESS HAD FALLEN when the knock came on the door of my room in the frontier outpost of Méndez, Ecuador. Barmio, my muleteer, stood with hat in hand, and the twinkle in his eye certainly meant good news, though his face carried its customary dead-pan expression. He stood there, saying nothing.

"What is it, Barmio?" I asked.

"Come with me, *señor*," he said, and turned to walk away.

"Wait a minute!" I called, and turned to grab my hat and wallet. I caught up with Barmio, and we walked down a narrow street lined with adobe huts. "Have you found him?" I asked. "This famous *Señor Ninguno Nombre*, Mr. No Name, whom no one seems to know?"

"This is the place," was Barmio's only answer, as he turned towards the last low hovel on the left. He pushed the door open and stepped inside. I had to duck to follow him. It was dark inside and the room was full of smells of food, sweat, stale cigarette smoke, and the sweetish fumes of fermented yuca mingled with the stronger alcoholic vapours of *aguardiente*. A dim light spread from a fire on the floor in the middle of the room, over which a large earthenware cauldron bubbled. On one side was a table with bottles, cups and gourds over which a monstrously fat woman presided. On low benches here and there men sat and drank, smoked, talked quietly.

Barmio pointed to two men sitting on the floor and leaning their backs against the opposite wall. "That is the man you want," he said, and turned back to the door. He disappeared, leaving me alone. But I knew that one rarely got knifed in the back in a place that looked so suitable for such acts. Sinister though the men appeared, I knew that they were poor, half-starved, beaten Indians trying to find a little comfort in quiet, companionable drinking. I knew that a fair number of them might be criminals—*Señor Ninguno Nombre* most certainly was a law-breaker—but they evaded or broke laws in order to get a little more food or an extra drink or two.

I walked over to the two men leaning against the wall, who looked up at me with the expected absence of all expression. To the older one I spoke Spanish and he replied. Yes, Barmio the muleteer had spoken to him about me. Yes, we could discuss a trip into the Jivaro country. I sat down on the floor and leaned my back against the wall.

Barmio was an honest man, I felt, and so I trusted his judgment about these men. If he

said they knew the Jivaro country well, they probably did. And since their business seemed to be, from what I had heard, the illegal bartering of shotguns for shrunken heads, they must not only know the country but know how to get along with the headhunting Indians. But a few questions might reassure me. I wanted reassurance, for when I walked off into the jungle with a guide I was pretty much at his mercy.

On my first expedition into the country of the Jivaro headhunters, my guide had been supplied by the Peruvian officers at Borja, for whom he worked. These men were recommended only by Barmio, himself a *mestizo* muleteer or *arriero* whom I had chosen from a crowd of bargaining muleteers, all looking like thugs, only seven days before. In seven days of falling, bumping, lunging and sweating down the Andes, however, you get to know a man very well. I knew Barmio, but I didn't know these two men, whose real names turned out to be Pablo and Diego.

Knew The Real Headhunters

Pablo was the older brother, the one known as *Ninguno Nombre*, about twenty-five years old. Diego was almost certainly under twenty. They were both thin, wiry and strong, half or three-quarters Indian. Pablo told me, when I asked him how well he knew the Jivaro language, that he was part Jivaro, and that he knew the language adequately. My chief concern was that he might know Jivaro Indians only on the fringes of their country, where contacts with civilization might have altered their normal way of life. But Pablo insisted, when I told him I had six weeks for the visit, that he was on good terms with clans and sub-tribes far deeper into the jungle than I could hope to penetrate in that time.

Suddenly, Pablo asked me why I wanted to visit the land of the headhunters.

"I do not want shrunken heads," I assured him, "nor do I want you to get them for me. So don't worry about a trap to get you to break the law. I want to take pictures, mainly motion pictures."

Satisfied with my purpose, he next asked about pay. We discussed fees for a time and soon came to an agreement. I bought them each a drink, which they accepted with dignity and sipped from their half coconut shells while I told them that the party consisted of Barmio and myself, three mules and equipment. We would leave early in the morning, from the square. "At seven o'clock in the square," Pablo said, and Diego nodded. I sealed the bargain with part of the fee and left.

Dreary Trek Through The Rain

The sun was shining brightly, and the path was almost a road, as we set out the next morning from Méndez, lying near the base of the eastern slope of the Ecuadorian Andes. But in less than half an hour, the sun disappeared behind grey clouds and the road shrank into a rocky jungle trail. Two hours later rain began to fall in a steady drizzle, and the trail was narrow, slippery, muddy and hard to follow.

It rained all day and it rained all night. We ate cold food because we could not light a fire. We rolled ourselves in our rubber ponchos and slept only because we were so tired that rain could not keep us awake. The next morning there was no longer a drizzle; instead we got hard, driving rain. It was one of those days that you learn to forget, a miserable, dreary and exhausting day with no rewards.

At the end of this day we halted, and when I looked ahead through the downpour I snapped out of my numbness and lethargy. There was a river—the Namangoza or the Paute, depending upon which map you look at. Across the river, into those thick woods—and there was the land of the headhunters. I looked ahead, then to right and to left, searching for the shaky, swinging cable bridge I expected. I could see none.

"Is this where we cross?" I asked Pablo. "There is no bridge."

"Yes, this is where we cross," he replied. "Yes, there is no bridge."

He pointed to a huge tree near the bank of the river and swung his arm in an arc across the river. I saw a thick rope. At least I saw it leave the tree on this side, but lost it in the murky mists over the middle of the river. I had to guess it was tied to another tree on the other side. I could not really see how wide the river was, but I could hear the roar of its swollen waters as they rushed over rocks.

"We cross on that rope," Pablo said. "See."

He led me close to the big tree and I saw a native-made hemp rope almost as thick as my wrist. There was a cast-iron pulley on it, from which hung two smaller ropes that supported a thick chunk of wood about six inches wide and three feet long. The traveller was supposed to perch on the narrow seat and propel himself across the river by pulling hand-over-hand on the main rope. Just how the traveller was supposed to do all this and carry cameras, tripod, cans of film, bundles of gifts, tent, food and other equipment I did not know.

Current Too Strong For Raft

"We can't get our equipment across that way," I said to Pablo. "We must find a place where the banks are not so steep or high. Then we can build a balsa raft and get everything across at once."

"No," Pablo said stolidly. "The rope bridge is made here because there are no places with lower banks. It would take half a day to build a balsa raft and then we could not get across on it. The current is too strong."

Pablo was plainly stating facts, and he said that he and Diego would get us and our equipment across on the rope bridge. "But tomorrow morning," he said. "Today it is too late. It will be dark in less than an hour."

I could not get to sleep easily that night. I kept picturing myself on that tiny seat, hanging over the roaring river, which sounded even more threatening in the silence of the night. In the morning it was still raining, but not so heavily. The sky was considerably brighter and it was light enough to get a picture of the hazardous crossing if I could find a spot from which to take it.

A Dangerous Picture To Take

Both Pablo and Diego were astounded, I know, at my concern about taking a picture. They thought I was worried about the bridge, and now all I could talk about was a good vantage point for a camera angle! I did find it, a huge boulder that jutted out into the river, higher than the bank itself. It was a hard climb to get on top of it, and then one had to lie flat to get on top of it, and then one had to lie flat to get a camera view beneath the boughs of the overhanging trees.

Barmio obligingly perched himself on the boulder for a shot of my crossing. I've always been grateful to him for that picture, though the light was bad and it was rather fuzzy. Few pictures have ever been taken under circumstances so precarious to both subject and photographer.

Diego and Pablo held the narrow seat while I slid and squeezed myself into it and practised the best position. When I was as comfortable as I would ever be, Pablo plunked a tripod into my arms. On top of this a motion picture camera, a still camera, a big box of films. It was more than I thought I could hold, but I was determined to carry the most important part of my equipment. Then Pablo climbed aboard. He straddled my knees facing me, although there was precious little space left on my knees to support him. His body pressed against the equipment, however, which pressed it against

Peruche's *jivaria*. The hut walls are made of ten-foot chonta poles lashed together with lianas.

The roof is thickly thatched with palm leaves

me so hard that the cargo was held as firmly as if lashed in place.

Diego gave us a firm but gentle push and we swung away from the tree, away from the steep embankment, and over the roaring waters below. At first the going was easy, downhill. Pablo's hands above his head grasped the main rope and moved us along without effort. But the seat swayed and tipped with every motion of his arms. I felt myself toppling backwards, then tipped forward until I thought Pablo would slide off my knees. I could tell by our angle that we had probably reached the middle of the river. There was about another seventy-five feet to go—but uphill now. Pablo pulled hard on the rope. I saw the long muscles in his lean, powerful arms bunch themselves into knots. His chest and stomach muscles grew taut and hard as iron, and his knees gripped mine like a vice as he inched the pulley-seat ahead.

Pablo gasped for breath. We slipped back along the rope, and Pablo grasped it frantically with both hands. We stopped, swinging gently to and fro. I looked up at the Indian's face and saw that his eyes were almost closed, his mouth slightly open, all the muscles tight. He looked like a marathon runner on his last lap. Then he looked at me and tried to smile. I tried to smile back, but both of us failed.

Water Roared Through Canyon

I averted my head and shot a quick glance sideways and down. Forty feet below, white water boiled over rocks as it tore through the deep canyon. It would be better to throw everything down there and help him. I looked up and the face of the Indian was not quite so strained. As if he had read my thoughts, he shook his head slightly and managed a smile. So I held on and waited while he rested. And I said to myself: What are you doing here? You must be crazy to leave a good business, a comfortable New York apartment, a city with all conveniences and every kind of entertainment, for *this*. Will you please consult a psychiatrist when you get back—*if* you get back?

Pablo started pulling again. Each tug of the arm took us only a few inches. I'm sure we travelled no more than three feet before he had to stop and rest again, although it could not have been restful to hang on to that heavy load to keep it from slipping back. We finally did reach the other bank. Pablo slid off my knees and held the seat while I fell out of it, still clutching the cameras, tripod and box. We both lay on the wet ground and breathed for a while. "Little bit heavier than my usual load," Pablo explained, almost apologetically.

Altogether the crossing took almost two hours. We waved to Barmio and his mules, on the other side, and watched them turn away and disappear in the jungle, heading back for Méndez. In exactly forty-five days, I hoped, he would stand at that spot again, waiting for us.

The hazardous river crossing assured me of one thing—I was entering Jivaro territory that had been scarcely touched by white civilization. Pablo knew that no good crossing existed for many miles in either direction. Few soldiers, missionaries, or traders would take this route when there still existed numerous simpler entries into Jivaro-land.

Relic From Prehistoric Era

We had to walk three full days before we reached the first *jivaria* (house of a Jivaro clan), three days of the kind of jungle hiking I expected—over a path scarcely discernible, through swampy mud hollows, over rocky hills, across innumerable streams, with alternate bursts of rain and hot sun.

I saw very few birds, but animals and snakes were around. A deer, too preoccupied with eating, bounded away as we came over the crest of a hill. A little later, as we approached a stream, we saw a tapir ambling slowly and awkwardly ahead of us. The eyesight of this relic from an ancient era is so poor that he did not see us, and apparently the wind was wrong because he did not scent that we were there. Then he raced for the stream with us behind him. We heard him plunge into the water, and when we got to the bank of the little river he was nowhere in sight.

Then Pablo grabbed my arm and pointed. The tapir was swimming downstream, without making a ripple, with only an inch or two of his nose protruding above the water.

I was glad for such a good view of this beast that looks as if it should be only in a museum alongside reproductions of dinosaurs and pterodactyls. It suggests a cross between a pig and a rhinoceros, and is actually related to the latter but not to the former.

Graceful But Menacing, Too

Oddly, it is probably related to the horse, an idea that strikes you as ludicrous at first glance. The thick, short legs, the hog's body, look like anything but a horse. The hoofs, however, are like a horse's hoofs; the long, flexible snout suggests the beginning of the horse's long head provided a good jaw is added beneath it; and the short bristles grow longer along the top of the neck into a kind of mane.

The prize fauna of this three-day trip was the anaconda we saw as we were about to ford a stream. It was lying full length on a fallen log that lay half on the land and half in the stream just about thirty feet below us. As Pablo pointed it out to me, it lifted its head, then lowered it into the water, while the rest of its long, graceful and menacing body slid without apparent movement behind it. In three seconds it had disappeared.

I had heard many arguments about the length of these anacondas, or water boas. Scientists still asked for proof of a reptile more than about twenty-five or twenty-six feet long, despite

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Cotlow, with Pablo astride, crosses a roaring river on a seat held by pulley to a cable. Pablo, who had to haul the swaying load by hand, almost collapsed en route from exertion

A headhunter weaves a loincloth on his loom. Jivaros divide their work according to the sex of what is worked on. Cotton is considered to be male, so men have to spin and weave

Knight errant of the Fifth

by PAULINE CLARK

ILLUSTRATED BY RONALD LAMPITT

They were burning his jacket—his precious tweed jacket! Mr. Foster swept into action. There was something in the pocket that *must* be saved

BRUCE FOSTER, oblivious of everything but the luxuriance in the greenhouse and the warm, clammy smell, watered his plants with loving care and imagined he was on one of those tropical treks he had dreamed of in his youth.

"Hey! Come on, Daddy. Mr. James is here!" It was the voice of his daughter Jane from the back door. Bruce came to slowly, as through a jungle of leaves and creepers.

"What's he want?" he said.

"He's come to fetch you in his car."

"Very nice of him, I'm sure. Why?"

"Oh, do come on, Daddy, he says you'll miss the train! You've only got a few minutes."

"Nonsense, it's only a quarter to eight."

"Bruce," called Mrs. Foster's voice from somewhere upstairs, "you're not going on the eight fifteen to town, you're going on the eight o'clock down train with Maurice, to that conference, dear. Hurry now."

Mr. Foster frowned, smiled, dumped down the can.

"Oh. Forgotten, for half a minute. . . . Coming!" he called. And he darted from the conservatory into the house, seized his raincoat from the hall, took his hat and brief-case and charged down the front path to the waiting car.

"I got the tickets yesterday," said his friend. "Knew we might be in a hurry. Here's yours."

In the train, taking off his raincoat, Bruce surveyed his jacket with a puzzled air, while Maurice James surveyed it with horror. It was an unspeakably ancient tweed jacket, its elbows patched and its cuffs bound with leather. It was used for gardening and pottering in the greenhouse or cleaning the car in. He often, indeed, left it hanging in the greenhouse, since his wife said it smelt.

"Blast! Forgotten to change my jacket," he said.

"You'll have to keep your coat on," Maurice said dubiously, trying not to smile.

"But I can't, we're going on to that luncheon party afterwards! Oh, blast, James!"

"Well you can't go in your shirt sleeves, old man. Never mind."

"But I do mind. Are we due to start? What's the time?"

"Look, here's Jane!"

Bruce's daughter, red and panting, was seen to cycle up the station slope and storm the barrier, a man's jacket in her arms, while her father leant waving wildly from the window.

"Here! Here I am! Good for you, Jane. Here, you can take this one home," he said, stripping himself hastily of the old tweed. The occupants of the carriage watched, entranced. Its pockets sagged, its lining hung down, its remaining buttons did not match. He thrust it at his daughter.

"You are a menace, Daddy," she said, panting. "Mummy found this over the dining-room chair."

"What a mercy. Thanks so much, dear." He took the other jacket from his daughter and struggled into it. "Don't wait, dear—oh, we're off. Goodbye! Back late, you know," he called, sinking into his seat.

He smiled happily across at Maurice. "Narrow squeak," he said, opening his paper.

"I did give you your ticket, didn't I?" said Maurice, a thought striking him.

Bruce plunged his hand confidently into his inside breast pocket, and his face lengthened.

"Confound it," he said irritably. "I'm really quite methodical, you know, if only the women would leave me alone. I've left it in that jacket."

HE saw James's smile widen into a laugh; he smiled sheepishly himself. The other people in the carriage, with true English reserve, tried to look as if they were not there.

The two men looked at each other and giggled like schoolboys.

"Another good story about me, I suppose," Bruce said.

And so indeed it became; seized upon with delight by the people who knew Mr. Foster, it was soon rampant through the whole department. For Bruce Foster's vagaries were often

fantastic, the kind which provided good stories. He was never openly accused of boiling the watch and watching the egg, though his wife said this was purely because his generation wore wrist watches and not half-hunters; but it was undoubtedly true that on a camping holiday with his children he had gone into his daughter's tent, blown in her face and kissed the candle.

This kind of absent-mindedness seemed to be all that was left of an idealistic and dreamy turn of mind in his youth, for the routine of a fairly responsible civil servant had become imposed upon it, and apart from his office, his huge appetite for books and his garden made up his life. He was tenacious of his spare time, and loved pottering in his greenhouse. He was tenacious also of his old clothes which he pottered in, particularly perhaps of this disreputable jacket.

It was, therefore, the incident of the ticket which induced Mrs. Foster to have one of her periodical attempts at making Bruce give the jacket away. He had, as she pointed out, a queue of other oldish jackets which could well be relegated to the greenhouse and the garden.

"And you've had it," she went on, "as long as we've been married. I should think twenty years, if a day."

"I've had it since before I was married, that's the point," said her husband, fixing a stud.

"What do you mean, that's the point?" she said blankly.

"Oh, well. Oh, I don't know, dear. All right, if you must give it away, you must, I suppose. I must try and remember to empty the pockets."

And seeing his wife looking faintly pained, he kissed her absent-mindedly on the nose, and forgot all about the jacket, for his wife had threatened to give it away many times before and not done so.

And, really, by this time, she thought, watching him in it one day, it is hardly worth giving away. I'd be ashamed to give it to a jumble sale; it's really only fit for a scarecrow.

Several weeks later, walking home from the station on a damp November evening, Bruce remarked to Maurice James on the very fine bonfire which the boys had piled on the green.

"Guy Fawkes tonight, is it? So it is. My, it's a good bonfire. How I used to enjoy a bonfire!"

"Yes, same here. Still do. Half a mind to go down and see it. But it looks as if they're going to begin any minute."

Already an excited group of little boys could be seen dancing and quarrelling on the muddy grass in the light of the lamps around the green, hardly able to contain themselves. Some pulled and pushed at the pile with sticks. An impatient squib banged and jumped, let off too soon by its owner. Sparklers and coloured matches lit up the scene, while an argument went on as to who should put the match.

"Now I realize where my branches went," Bruce said meditatively. "I bunged up that hole in my back hedge with all the prunings the other day, Maurice, and by the next night the whole lot had disappeared, and the hole was bigger than ever." He laughed, good-naturedly.

"Probably watched you from the lane, putting it all in," said his companion. "Well, good night, old man."

MR. FOSTER waved his umbrella. It was drizzling slightly, which was why the small boys were impatient to light the fire, he supposed. He turned in at his gate.

"Lovely bonfire the children have made," he said, closing the front door.

"Oh, Bruce, yes. They came round for clothes for the guy, and I thought better now than never, and gave them your old jacket——" said his wife from the kitchen.

"The guy! My jacket!" Bruce was galvanized into immediate and surprising action.

"Yes, dear. You said——"

"My jacket! I can't . . . you don't. . . ."

And he was gone, out of the back door, hatless, his raincoat flapping, his legs long and spidery striding over his back garden. The warm drizzle hit him in the face, the bluff night seemed to inspire him with a frenzy. He seized the washing prop leaning against the shed, tore down the path between his fruit trees, and out into the lane at the foot of his garden, the short cut to the green. Manipulating the prop with difficulty, because he was tall and it was tall and branches overhung the lane, he fled on towards the circle of boys and the looming pile

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In a flash, he was out of the back door —hatless, raincoat flying, racing down the path towards the crackling bonfire

ALONG MY LINE (7) by Gilbert Harding

Broadcasting House — here I come

Gilbert had made up his mind to be a lawyer, but the war put paid to his studies. Then out of the dismal future shone a new hope—a job at the B.B.C.

First step to fame—the earliest photograph of Gilbert, the broadcaster, in the B.B.C.'s files .

FRESH FROM CYPRUS, where I had taught at the Greek Gymnasium at Limassol, and the Turkish Lycée at Nicosia, I once again decided that I was fed up with being a schoolmaster. The same feeling that made me desert teaching for the Bradford City Police Force three years before began to exert its old power once again.

I had always wanted to go to the Bar and become a lawyer. My grandfather had succeeded in putting me off for a while when, as a schoolboy, I had once foolishly said how nice it would be to study law.

Taking me to London, he had led me to the Temple. Starting from the Strand we slowly made our way to the Embankment, looking at the names of the various lawyers who had chambers there. Then, sitting down on a bench overlooking the Thames, my grandfather asked: "How many names did you see?"

"Oh, hundreds," I said.

"How many have you ever heard of before?"

"Oh, Patrick Hastings, Curtis-Bennett, Horace Avory, Norman Birkett," I said. "Six or seven, I suppose."

"And," said my grandfather impressively, "do you think you'll be another one of those in twenty years' time? Or will you be just one of hundreds grubbing around year after year for pettifogging briefs?"

It was a clumsy, brutal argument. But it succeeded in putting me off. I have since learned that when pressed to forecast exactly what I would become when I grew up, my grandfather would say: "A comedian. I can see no future for him except on the halls." He did not know about television.

Worked To Pay Student Fees

But, back from Cyprus, I continued to hanker after a legal career. I loved, and still love, the pomp and ceremony of the assizes and the Old Bailey. I love the formalities and subtleties of jurisprudence. London's Inns of Court—Gray's and Lincoln's, the Inner and Middle Temples—attract me no less for the architecture than for their atmosphere. But there was nothing romantic behind my decision to study law. Thanks to the generosity of a friend I became a member of the Honourable Society of Gray's Inn and began to "eat my dinners."

To pay for my keep, I also worked for a man called Marcy who ran a crammer's establishment at 88 Chancery Lane. He paid me £6 a week, which was just enough for me to live on and pay for my own student's fees.

The next year or so was very happy. I persuaded my sister, who was teaching in

Gilbert at work on one of his early Overseas Service scripts, with Stewart MacPherson (standing), Margaret Middleton, and Wynford Vaughan-Thomas

Hounslow, to give up her lodgings and share a flat with me at Twickenham. It was fun installing furniture of our own, collecting a few little treasures, and feeling that once we had shut the front door we were really at home. We moved in on the day on which King Edward VIII abdicated. I was thirty the following June.

Most of the time I spent at Marcy's crammer, where a large number of boys were taught successfully—God knows how—in the most uncomfortable room I have ever seen. The big room looked out over Chancery Lane, and I was always furious when a street musician came along with a hurdy-gurdy to play the most banal, yet insidious, melodies right under our window. Angrily I would lean out of the window and shoo him off, only to find the fellow there two or three hours later. My threats having failed to get rid of him, I would fling him a shilling and tell him to go elsewhere.

Learned Hurdy-gurdy Secret

Years afterwards, I discovered by chance that the boys had briefed the hurdy-gurdy man to annoy me. He did very well out of us. The boys would give him a shilling to come to Chancery Lane, and then I would give him a shilling to go away. An excellent arrangement for all except one harassed and not too even-tempered tutor.

There was I, earning my living and going to law lectures whenever I could. I was a diligent pupil in the Temple, passing my exams with surprising ease. Roman Law, Constitution Law, Contract and Tort came easily to me.

My sister and I had furnished the flat on the hire purchase system. We both had regular jobs and for me (perhaps spurred by her good example) it was early to bed and up at four for three hours' swotting before leaving for Chancery Lane. There always seemed to be enough money, and while we lived modestly, I was able to see the latest plays, buy the books I wanted and eat in fairly good restaurants. Working to a budget, we knew where we were and did not step over the limit.

King George VI's Coronation year passed into the next—a year when the war trumpets began to sound more insistently and the world crisis became as much part of the household prattle as the word "cricket." But for me they were years of real hard work. I was determined that my boys should not fail their examinations, and few did. For my part, I wanted to pass the Bar examinations, and there was every hope of my doing so.

I remember one incident of about this time which well illustrates the appalling snobbishness of our social structure. We had in my class a boy—call him Vincent—who had everything in the way of mental and physical equipment to fit him for a commission in the army. He only came to us because he would undoubtedly pass the Civil Service Commission (Army Entrance) Examination and hoped, by diligent cramming, to get even higher marks. Vincent was, however, handicapped by a very strong cockney accent, of which he was at that time happily unaware. It was not my place to point it out, however.

To the best of my recollection, out of one thousand total marks for the examination with which this brilliant boy was concerned, 250 were for "interview and record." Vincent actually did achieve the exceptionally good total of six hundred marks, but in "interview and record" he flopped badly enough to fail.

Vincent's father was horrified. One afternoon he called on me and asked what had gone wrong. I told him.

"But," said he, a fine militant cockney himself, "you can't penalize a kid just for the way he talks."

"Unfortunately," I said, "you can. I won't pretend to approve of such discrimination, but it exists, and the only thing to do about it is to fight it on its own terms."

"How can we do that?" asked the father.

"Send him to an expert elocution master," I said.

The father was wealthy enough to do this. The second time Vincent took the exam he spoke with sufficient lah-de-dah to achieve a good place in the examination—just in time to get killed in the war.

By the summer of 1939—refusing to admit to myself that there ever could be a war, and having saved enough on which to live for six months—I decided to stop working for a living and concentrate on passing the Bar finals. Having found a barrister friend to take me as a pupil for nothing instead of the usual hundred guineas, I went to work on an all-out, concentrated assault on becoming a lawyer.

Everyone knows what happened on September 3, 1939. On that day, after hearing Mr. Chamberlain's saddened and disillusioned statement that a state of war existed between this country and Germany, I closed my book on Equity. I have never opened a law book since.

Army Commission—Or Nothing

My first move on the outbreak of war was to visit my mother at Bradford. There was little enough to say in the light of the vast tragedy which was tearing up families all over Europe. I spent much of my time helping mother to get up blackout curtains all over the institution. These tasks over, I felt, as usual, in the way. My mother was so busy, and I simply could not follow her around with medicine bottles and bandages. So I got a temporary job as a clerk in the office of the registrar of births, deaths and marriages in the city of Bradford. I learned how to issue copies of certificates concerning these acts of human mortality and how to consult files and records. It was dull work, and left me baffled and frustrated at the end of each day.

At that time you had to have influence to get into the army at all, and apart from being medically unfit, I had one very good reason for not going into the ranks. For years I had earned my living by being violently offensive and sarcastic to young men. I knew they would now be captains and majors—only too glad to get their own back—and I decided that it would have to be a commission or nothing. For a while I was faced with the prospect of nothing—a depressing situation for anyone.

The war seemed to be progressing slowly. A good time was being had by all jacks-in-office and suddenly-jumped-up local officials. Apart

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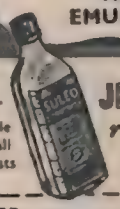

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from that our noble crusade did not seem to amount to much. The great lion, Churchill, had not yet begun to growl. I was nearly thirty-three and not due for call-up for some time. So I got another crammer job, this time at the University Tutorial College in Red Lion Square, London. I cannot say that I was overjoyed to be back at teaching.

I had got to know some B.B.C. people, and there was some talk of my applying for jobs, but it never amounted to much. Then one morning, when I had not been back in London long, there came a telegram saying: IF INTERESTED IN POST OVERSEAS SERVICE PLEASE CONTACT ME AT B.B.C. SIGNED SALT. At last the B.B.C. was inviting me to join its staff.

Momentous Telegram

I looked at the telegram in my hand, conscious—as I had been that time when I heard the news from Cyprus—that this piece of paper would effect infinite changes in my life, changes as yet unforeseen and unpredictable. It was the first time I had come across the horrible verb "contact," but even as my schoolmaster's mind deplored its use, my restless and curious spirit was projecting me swiftly and alarmingly forward. Within ninety minutes of receiving the telegram at Twickenham, I was at Broadcasting House.

I went to see a man called Ambler, a charming fellow who is now dead. As general establishment officer, it was his business to tell me how much I was to be paid as a "monitor."

"Your commencing salary will be £480 a year," he said.

"But that's wonderful," I exclaimed.

"What!" said he. "Do you mean to say you think it's enough?"

"Enough, my dear fellow?" I replied. "I think it's marvellous."

He stared at me in amazement. "Do you know," he said, "that's the first time anyone has said that to me. Let's go and have a drink."

The second World War was still at its "phoney" stage when I started work on the second floor of Broadcasting House. I was now getting more money than I had ever earned before and I settled down to work with a will, determined to make a B.B.C. career.

It was a curious job. The B.B.C. had set up a listening service in the country (at Evesham, but that was very hush-hush then) where, in considerable discomfort and under cloak-and-dagger supervision, people of all nationalities listened to foreign broadcasts in practically every language. These would be translated into English and sent by teleprinter to London, where people like myself would be employed as sub-editors to make a "daily digest of foreign broadcasts."

Spoke To Churchill

Most of my colleagues had been recruited from Fleet Street. I covered the fact that I lacked any kind of inside journalistic experience by listening assiduously to those who had. But I must have had something myself, because before you could say "Jack Robinson" I was a chief sub-editor. That meant another £120 a year. Then, before you could say "Jack Robinson" again, I was an "information bureau supervisor."

That was a most interesting job. All the teletype messages came to us first, and it was our business to skim them for immediate "flashes" and inform the various Service departments of anything of immediate interest. Some sentences were scrambled, some messages were printed in various colours, and a kind of E. Phillips Oppenheim mystery atmosphere prevailed.

One incident I shall never forget. Late one night a voice came over one of the signal lines to inform me that the First Lord of the Admiralty wanted to speak to me. I waited and a few seconds later the famous voice of Winston Churchill asked: "Is there anything important from Norway?"

"Norway?" I repeated. "No, sir. Not yet."

"Please to keep me informed on this line," Churchill said.

It was not long before the Norwegian radio began to complain about mining of their territorial waters by the Royal Navy. I quickly got on the line to the Admiralty and it was thus that the war leader learned that the war was about to begin in earnest.

Then the war really began. Bombs became a nightly accompaniment to London life, and Broadcasting House became a humming fortress of communication. The monitoring service did wonderful work. By that time the reception engineers had reached such a degree of perfection that they were able to pick up interplane communications between German pilots on their bombing raids. In a matter of minutes we would warn the R.A.F. of the Nazi flyers' intentions. Enemy bombers were frequently intercepted and driven back as a result of stray German intercom messages picked up by our service.

My most spectacular recollection of this was finding myself listening to two Fokker Wulfe pilots exulting over the shooting down of a Sunderland flying-boat off the east coast. Within a few minutes of our hearing this, an air-sea rescue launch was on its way from Felixstowe to pick up the crew.

There was a special alarm under my desk, controlled by a lever near my feet. In the event of an invasion I was supposed to press this in order to set off an elaborate sequence of security measures. One day I absentmindedly touched the lever with my foot. Immediately, iron doors clanged throughout the building, bells rang, and a contingent of Home Guards rushed in at the double. It did not help much when I apologetically explained that I had just been stretching my legs.

Crazier And Crazier

These crazy days at Broadcasting House came to an end and I was precipitated into the even crazier atmosphere of Evesham, where we worked in the oddest circumstances. Being "protected" by the army, we had to show passes every few yards.

With hundreds more I was billeted compulsorily on the long-suffering inhabitants. Long before I arrived these good people had had more than their share of shocks.

There we were, the rag-tag and bob-tail of the arts, the journalistic and academic worlds, flung upon this quiet agricultural community with a sprinkling of sad and weary displaced persons from the Continent, long exiled from their own homelands and now employed to listen and record the story of their countries' ruin.

The exacting work, the long hours and the dreary night shifts, the frightful stupidity of the military guards, made for every kind of short temper. Long and scarcely audible telephone conversations made for madness. We worked in huts inadequately separated by shoddy wooden partitions.

At the entrance of the former stately home which served as our headquarters stood the Golden Gates. One day a woman arrived at this ornate entrance in a taxi and asked to be let through. When asked to produce her pass she said she had lost it. The sentry refused to let her through.

Harpist At The Gate

"But you must let me in," said the woman. "I am Madame Stella and I am broadcasting in a few minutes."

"I'll ring the controller," said the sentry and went to the telephone.

Now the taxi-driver decided to liven matters up. "Sorry, lady," he said. "Afraid you'll have to pay me off now. I've got to meet a train and I'm late already."

"But you can't leave me here with my instrument."

"Sorry, lady," insisted the driver.

Out of the taxi stepped Madame Stella and, with the driver's help, she dragged out an enormous harp.

The sentry looked up in surprise just as he got through to the controller. "Sorry to bother you, sir," he said, "but Madame Stella is at the Golden Gate with her harp."

"All right," said the controller. "Tell her the angels won't keep her long."

Winston Churchill again briefly touched my life. At Evesham I was on

"What was it you said you won these for, Arthur?"

a kind of marathon night shift which began at 2 a.m. I had, by the way, been promoted again, and my salary was now £840 a year. My main duty was to deal with what was called the Cabinet Report. The monitors, who listened twenty-four hours a day, recorded and reported their material. This was then sub-edited and edited, duplicated and then given to one of four people for final breakdown for transmission to the War Cabinet.

I was one of the four who frequently relayed the day's report direct to Churchill. To my great delight I learned that, when I was off for two weeks, the Prime Minister asked: "Where is that man with the succinct mind?" I like to believe that story, and sometimes I wonder if the Prime Minister ever knew what happened to that man after the war.

Though I myself was now "sitting pretty" and holding down a cushy job, I did not settle at Evesham. Night after night I was moved, sometimes to anger, sometimes to pity, by the staff of underpaid, badly housed women whose business it was to cut the duplicating stencils and type. For as little as £2 15s. a week they worked all night in huts which were either too hot or too cold, and always badly ventilated.

Like ours, the movements of these girls were constantly checked by sentries, and their privacy was negligible. It became a wry joke among us to say: "If there's a fire, send for a fireman—and hope to God that he hasn't forgotten his pass."

Defended Professor

My habit of butting in when some petty official tried to devise some new humiliation for these overworked women did not make me one of the most popular people around the place. And on one occasion I was infuriated when a smart aleck, from the safety of his executive's desk, began to berate a tired but enormously dignified Central European professor.

"Where did you get this information?" I heard the executive say as I entered his office. "What is the source?"

"But I have told you," the professor said patiently. "It is the latest policy-line of the Wilhelmstrasse."

"The Wilhelmstrasse?" this erudite executive asked. "Who the blazes is that?"

"The Wilhelmstrasse is the Berlin equivalent of Whitehall," the professor explained. "It is a colloquialism for the German Foreign Office."

"Then why the heck don't you damn' well say so?" shouted the man at the desk. "You foreigners are all alike. Damned shifty lot who won't say what they mean."

At this point I could no longer restrain myself. "All right, professor," I said, "I will explain to this man who, I am ashamed to say, is a fellow-Englishman."

There was a terrible row during which, naturally, I told the fellow exactly what I thought of pipsqueaks who insult people who are not in a position to fight back. And so I added yet one more to my collection of people who dislike me for speaking up instead of whining behind their backs.

As the war got more and more serious I longed to have a more active share in it. Lord Kennet's committee investigating the call-up decided that the age should be raised. That made me available for National Service. But the medical examiners at Worcester rejected me *in toto*, so that put an end to my conscience-stricken broodings about military life.

"My Voice Shocked Me"

I made my first broadcast from Evesham. A series called the *Voice Of The Nazi* was done each week by a Scottish professor. When he was unable to find the time I deputized for him. Being for the overseas service, each broadcast was pre-recorded, so I was able to hear my recorded voice for the first time. It gave me an awful shock and seemed to be a cross between a High Church clergyman and J. B. Priestley. Now, of course, I am used to it, but that first time—as happens to everyone—it was hard to realize that this detached voice was mine, as other people heard it.

One of my fellow-broadcasters was a handsome coffee-coloured Moslem from North Africa, who had about four or five different uniforms, and was the only man they could find who could speak Mograbi. He spoke no English at all. He had a spectacular career and almost finished it by throwing a plate of curry at one of the canteen waitresses, which compelled General Sir Geoffrey Howard, who was then the Evesham director, to treat him in an orderly-room manner and try to take something of his arrogance out of him. Whether he did or not I do not know.

I enjoyed broadcasting far more than monitoring and determined to try to get taken on full-time as some sort of speaker.

Archy Harding and Felix Felton came down to Evesham on a short refresher course with the staff training department, and I succeeded in making some impression on both of them. The result was that either or both—I shall never know which—urged Michael Standing, whom I had not met and who was then head of outside broadcasts, to see me.

So up to London I went to see Michael in his office in Cavendish Square, where I was able to overcome his misgivings. After a certain amount of smart talking on my part, searching penetration on his, and a very good lunch which he paid for, I found myself accepted as a member of the Outside Broadcasting Department with Stewart MacPherson, Raymond Glendenning, Wynford Vaughan-Thomas, Henry Riddell and Frank Moore O'Ferrall as colleagues.

NEXT WEEK: I start my climb up the B.B.C. ladder

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AMAZON HEADHUNTERS

Continued from page 23

stories of thirty- and forty-foot anacondas. I decided that here was an opportunity to check up, for the snake had been almost exactly the length of the log. I had no tape measure with me, but I know precisely the length of my arm from elbow to tips of fingers—for just such purposes—and knew I could get a measurement that would be within one foot of correct. I would have sworn this anaconda was forty feet long.

I went downstream to the log and measured it. Twenty-one feet. Now I understand why the tales, even by good observers, did not match the facts. These long and sinuous creatures present an optical illusion of greater length than they possess.

Even at twenty-one feet, an anaconda could easily swallow a good-sized pig, for it has a double jaw that unhinges itself to open the thorax tremendously. It might swallow a small man easily, too, but the anaconda will not in ordinary circumstances attack a human being, probably because it is easier to swallow three smaller animals than one very big animal—and the three smaller animals are usually available.

Warriors On The Trail

In the middle of the afternoon on our third day after crossing the cable-bridge, Pablo and Diego began to shout, "*Whe-dee*"—the Jivaro call that meant friends were approaching. I felt myself begin to grow tense, excited, a trifle fearful as always of this first meeting with savages.

We walked on to the steady refrain of *whe-dee, whe-dee,* for more than an hour. Suddenly Pablo stopped. Two Jivaro warriors stood squarely on the trail ahead of us, not ten feet away, lances in their hands.

The Indians did not look friendly. They did not look hostile. They just looked steadily. Pablo gave them one minute to look, then he spoke in the Jivaro tongue. I saw they were not watching him or Diego. Their eyes were fastened on me.

Pablo was telling the two Indians, in the sing-song chant that suggested Chinese, all about me. Apparently it was a satisfactory story, for the two turned and motioned for us to follow.

Although we were forty or fifty miles from the area of my first visit to Jivaros, they looked just the same as others I'd seen, proving once again the identity rather than just the similarity of the cultures, customs, costumes and backgrounds of all Jivaros, no matter how ancient and bitter their feuds.

Bound By Blood Ties

It was difficult to say just which sub-tribe of the Jivaros this clan belonged to. Actually, the big sub-tribal groupings have been made by outsiders rather than by the Jivaros themselves. The Indians rarely make distinctions between Huambisas, Antipas, Aguarunas, as the white men do. They are more likely to identify much smaller groups, clans, or groups of clans bound together by blood ties.

At the *jivaria*, our welcome was stoic but much less formal than that received from the clan I had met on my first trip. Women and children did not scramble for the back door of the house, but stood about in groups looking at us curiously. A half-dozen men stared steadily but not with hostility or apparent readiness to attack. The sourest Indian of them all was the headman, a persimmon-faced old fellow who talked with Pablo for five minutes before turning and going into the *jivaria*, leaving the door open.

Happily, the greeting ceremony lasted less than ten minutes. The moment it was over, I dug from our packs gifts for the Indians—mirrors, scissors, a few knives, a length of red cloth, and handed them to Persimmon Face for distribution. Then I stripped off my wet clothes and wrapped myself in a blanket from the pack which had miraculously kept thoroughly dry. I hung my clothes on a line of fibre and put on my pyjamas and a pair of thin leather slippers. As I sat back on the platform bed, I smiled and sighed.

Indian women brought me *nijimanche* of which I drank a little, and then baked yuca and roast plantain. I dug a can of sardines from my pack and ate ravenously, happily. It was dark now and I lay down on the platform bed.

I was a primitive man at that moment, happy in the satisfaction of my physical needs, asking no questions about anything.

Most savages I have met rarely ask for explanations. They do not ask why or how. They are curious about my lighter or my fountain pen, but don't ask how they work. White man's magic, that's all. Since magic is, in effect, their answer to all ultimate questions, they have no need to ask why and how. I suppose the questioning mind is responsible for civilized man's being civilized.

Nevertheless, the Jivaro is better adapted to his environment than I am, than you are. He feels more secure, despite the known and unknown dangers that surround him, than we do. He spends more hours of his life in a happy state than we do. He suffers not a whit from ulcers, cancers, diabetes, allergies, asthma, neuroses, psychoses, inadequate housing, corrupt politicians, sexual deviation, theft, murder and war.

The last two items may surprise you. But the Jivaro murders no more than our state officials murder when they execute a man for crime. He carries on war only in the same sense that Christian crusaders warred against the heathen who had desecrated the holy places. If it is war, it is justified by the noblest ideals, the purest religious motives.

Superficially, civilized man compares very unfavourably with almost any primitive man in the world. His superiority lies not in the jet airliner, the pilotless rocket, and the longevity that enables a man to be miserable with his neuroses for a longer span. It lies only in the unrealized potentialities of the mind that ferrets out answers to why and how.

The Jivaro's failure to ask why leaves him a slave of superstitions that will wipe out his race in time if he does not begin asking the questions that will end them. He does not wonder why a tree falls on a relative and kills him. He knows—the evil spirits of an enemy *wishins* (witch-doctor) caused it to fall. He does not wonder why the river floods. He knows—evil spirits of the water. His certainty of the answers gives him much of the sense of security he enjoys.

The next morning was bright and clear. Now, I thought, I would get pictures that I wanted. Armed with a motion picture and a still camera, I walked into the clearing. I started with a shot of old Persimmon Face himself as he sat weaving a huge basket of fibre. When he saw the camera he screamed, dropped the basket, and ran at me violently waving his arms.

Fright In Their Eyes

The whole clan came running at his scream and gathered behind him, staring at our cameras with real fright in their eyes. Pablo and Diego ran to our sides, interpreting the old man's threatening cries. He would not let us take the souls of his people. He would not let us send evil spirits into them. He would not let us kill the yuca and the plaintain in their fields.

I tried to explain what a camera was, showing him photographs of Jivaros on the lower Santiago that I had taken on my first expedition. He would not even look. Pablo and Diego argued with the old one. It was all futile. I would get no pictures at this *jivaria*. I consulted with Pablo about the possibility of going on to the next one.

"The next one will be like this," he said, shaking his head. "The *jivarias* near here are in the same clan and will probably feel the same way. The only thing we can do is travel to another group."

He turned to Diego. "Peruche?" he asked.

Diego shook his head. "No, not Peruche," he said.

"Yes, I know, Peruche is a strong man, a mighty warrior of many heads, a man not to be trifled with. But he is fair. And I think he is smarter than most of the others."

"That's the man for me," I said. "Who is Peruche?"

"A famous *curaka*, head of many clans, about three days' walk from here," Pablo said. "A tough one, a very tough one. But smart. He must be to reach seventy years of age as he has. He would understand about cameras, I think, and let you take pictures. But I cannot promise."

An Unusual Photograph

So we walked three days. As we approached the *jivaria* of Peruche I felt sure that this would be a great experience. It is hard to give a reason for such feelings. Having three pleasant days after so much rain helped, of course. And my belief in the law of averages told me that after one such disappointing experience with headhunters I was due for a good one. Finally, I got the picture I never thought I would get—a bird's-eye view of a *jivaria* in its clearing.

Indians usually build their houses on the top of a small hill, for the sake of drainage and protection. So I could never get on a higher hill for a picture. Within the clearing itself, it was almost impossible to get a view of the whole house, let alone the house against its background. But as we came on Peruche's *jivaria*, we saw it from above—approached it from a hill even higher than the hill on which the house stood. Best of all, there was little foliage between the hilltop and the clearing. I could get a clear shot of the whole thing.

I didn't wait for permission. I stopped where I was and took pictures. Then I saw a man in the clearing outside the *jivaria* and he did what I have

Consider your verdict

by

RUSSELL SCOTT, LL.B.

JOHN and Harriet rented a little café just off the main street of their town. It was not exactly a goldmine, but by sharing the work between them they managed to make a comfortable living.

John ran the café for most of the day, and Harriet took her turn at serving in the evenings. Otherwise, she was busy preparing light refreshments behind the scenes.

They had often said that the place was really too small. The café itself was kept tidy enough, but there wasn't much room behind the counter. John's and Harriet's living-quarters were reached by a door behind the counter, which led into a room which was half store-room, half kitchen. In the floor was a trap-door, leading down into the cellar where most of the stores and provisions were kept.

Once or twice a week, John would open the trapdoor and bring up goods on a small lift. Both he and his wife were quite expert at avoiding the trapdoor when it was open. But, one day, John was careless. He forgot to close it as soon as he had finished.

Rushing to fetch another loaf of bread, Harriet disappeared through the gaping hole before she could stop herself.

She was badly injured, and later decided to try and recover damages for her accident. She claimed that the owner of the café was responsible for the negligence of his servant—her own husband. After he recovered from his surprise at being sued, the owner raised an unusual defence.

"I admit that John was negligent," he said. "After all, he left the trapdoor open. If this were a normal case, I suppose that—as employer—I would be liable." But, he added, it is an ancient English doctrine that husband and wife are one person in the eyes of the law. This still holds good in cases such as negligence, and in such cases husband and wife cannot sue each other.

"Because Harriet could not sue her own husband," said the owner, "she decided to sue me instead. Her whole case is really a blind."

What is your verdict? For the judge's decision, see page 44

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All you need to do:—Melt margarine (or fat) and syrup slowly in a saucepan. *Do not boil.* Add the cocoa. Remove from heat, stir in sugar. Using metal spoon, quickly fold in flakes and coconut (or grated orange peel) until coated. Spoon into eleven or twelve portions. If syrup is not available, double the quantity of sugar or icing sugar.

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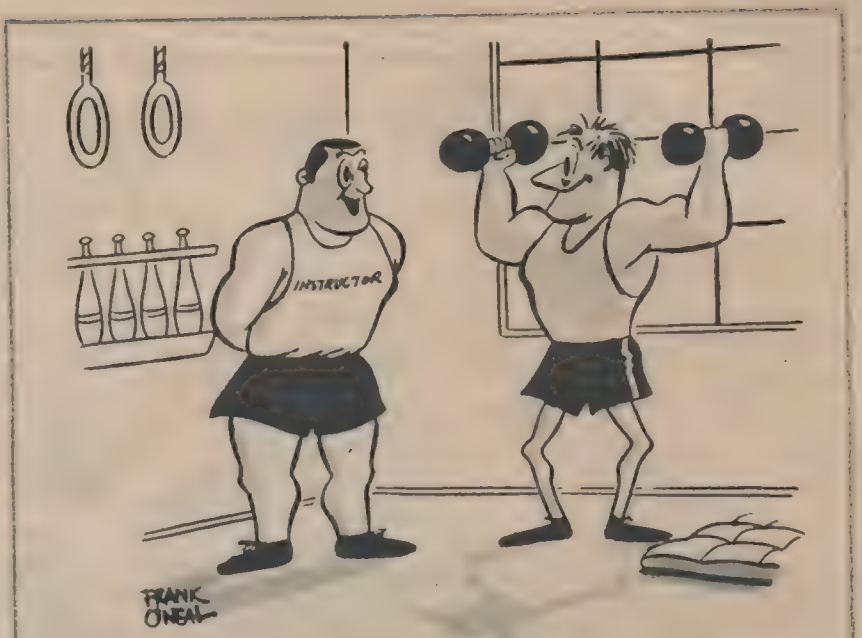

"Splendid! Tomorrow we'll start on your legs"

rarely seen a Jivaro do. He looked up and saw us and waved!

"Peruche!" Pablo cried. "There is Peruche."

Peruche was a great and good man, a close friend in a life blessed with many good friends. Even today I remember him with warmth and admiration as a man who lived a full and useful life, according to his lights, who possessed a warm and open heart and had one of the quickest minds I have encountered.

Even at seventy years of age he enjoyed life with zest and vigour. His lined face showed clusters of fine laugh wrinkles around twinkling eyes. I have seen him look as dignified as a king, as frighteningly angry as an avenging angel. But he could turn to me with the slightest of smiles that warmed my heart, reassured me, and took me into his family. It was a family worth being taken into, for the bonds of love that tied its members together were strong. Never have I seen a more tenderly caressing expression than Peruche's when he looked at his grandchildren.

He was a Jivaro of great repute, a warrior of many heads, a hunter of skill and cunning, and acknowledged *curaka* of several clans covering a wide territory. But he was a simple man, relaxed and honestly modest, who never threw his weight around.

I learned all these things about Peruche in the course of the three weeks I lived with him and his family, but even at that first meeting I liked him tremendously. I liked his informality and the brevity of his greeting. He spoke to Pablo and Pablo answered in a few sentences, and that was all. With a smile he welcomed us to the *jivaria* and asked one of his wives to bring *nijimanche*. We drank and were at home.

Chief Had Four Wives

There were many women in the *jivaria*, of all ages. I soon learned that the old *curaka* himself had four wives, the oldest around sixty-five, the youngest about twenty. Because of rather unusual circumstances that developed later, I came to know them all rather well—ordinarily an impossible task. I learned at first hand what I had read and heard, that Jivaro wives got along well together. Not once did I detect the slightest indication of jealousy between them, or ill feeling of any kind. Each wife was devoted to Peruche but none felt possessive about him.

In the Jivaro country, polygamy is almost essential. Without it the constant warfare would long ago have wiped out the race. Aside from being necessary, it works remarkably well. I learned that Peruche's three older wives had helped him to select the youngest many years before, when she was only eleven.

That was the wife he offered me, a day or two after I had set up my tent in his clearing. Abanasa was her name, and she was an attractive young lady by Jivaro standards—stout and strong. She was shy but smiling when Peruche led her to me and put her hand in mine.

When Pablo translated Peruche's offer of his most attractive wife for the duration of my visit, I thanked him warmly but explained that it was taboo for me to take a woman from another tribe.

This explanation was satisfactory to Peruche, who could understand taboos, but he insisted that Abanasa should take care of some of my wants, if not all of them. No man should perform some tasks, Peruche felt—preparing meals, hauling water, carrying bundles. Abanasa, with great good spirit and fidelity, performed such tasks as I let her for the rest of my stay with Peruche. She even went along as my "wife" on a hunting trip of several days, to carry supplies.

Savage Punishment

Jivaro husbands punish infidelity with brutal severity. They do not kill adulterous wives because women are too valuable. But the one who strays may be affixed to the ground with lances for a day or have other punishment inflicted just short of death. On the other hand, a Jivaro will offer a wife, as Peruche offered Abanasa to me. Or he will consider a straight business deal with a white man—lending a wife in return for sufficient payment.

Secret and unpaid-for adultery offends him. Prospectors and soldiers on the edge of the Jivaro country sometimes wander into the jungle looking for women. If they find any, they have little chance of coming out alive.

Not every Jivaro can easily find as many wives as he wants. Sometimes he gets one from a raid on an enemy *jivaria*. More often he purchases her from her father or brother. If he is a great warrior and hunter he has little difficulty.

Peruche's three husky sons were all married. The eldest, Juanga, about thirty-five, had four wives, just like his father. (There had been several older sons, but they had all been killed.) The second son, Peasa, now in his twenties, had three wives, and the youngest, Ambusha, only eighteen, had two. Ambusha was courting a young lady of a neighbouring *jivaria* while I was there. Despite the commercial nature of the transaction, there is a strong element of romance in Jivaro marriages, especially with young couples.

Ambusha had seen the girl when, returning from a hunt, he had stopped at the friendly *jivaria*. She attracted him at once, and he thought that she regarded him rather favourably, but no words were exchanged. He prepared himself for a visit three days later, painting himself with great care, cutting his hair neatly in front, weaving

toucan feathers in his braids, putting small feathers on his ear plugs. The call, however, was not officially a call. Ambusha said he just happened to stop by on his way from a hunt.

He was welcomed into the *hea*, of course, and served *nijimancke* by all the women. When the girl of his fancy served him, he took the gourd roughly and acted thoroughly unpleasant. When he tossed the food she served him on the ground, she knew he was strongly interested.

I was at Peruche's at the time of Ambusha's second visit, and saw him bring home the leaves of a plant called *muspa*. He placed them near a fire until they dried, then crumbled them into a powder and added some sweet-smelling herbs. He took this along with him on his next call, together with several gifts—vanilla beans, a comb, and the mirror I had given him only a few days before.

Peruche told me that when he entered the girl's *jivaria*, he would try to rub the powder on her hands and breasts. If she looked upon him with favour, she would let him. That and taking his presents would tell him she would accept him.

No Weddings For Jivaros

Ambusha was very happy when he came home, although he tried to act quite brusque and casual about the whole thing. For the next step he was out of it. He sent a cousin off to negotiate with the girl's father. I could never learn what price he paid, but the deal went through and the girl came to Peruche's *jivaria* to live. There was no marriage ceremony of any kind. She was obviously very much in love with Ambusha and was joyfully welcomed by that young man's two other wives.

Peruche seemed pleased that I was so interested in his family, and he made me feel free to ask about them. He seemed to understand that I was just curious in learning about their relationships, for he had the same kind of mind himself. He was one of the few Jivaros I knew who asked almost as many questions as he answered—about my country, our clothes, our women. Talking to him was a pleasure.

Peruche was pleased with me from the outset because of the gifts I brought and because I was the excuse for a party—he loved parties. The choicest gift was the oddest thing I had ever taken with me, even more unusual than the gramophone of my first trip.

I had bought it on impulse in a Cuenca shop. It was a hat of some kind, although I have never seen such a hat on anyone's head anywhere. It looked like a cross between a fez and an overseas cap, but very fancy. The colour attracted me, I think—bright red felt. There was a tuft of white on top, and the bottom was fringed all around with a kind of white lace.

Would Not Take Hat Off

Peruche put it on his head the moment I gave it to him and never took it off again. I'm sure he wore it at night, and I know he was wearing it when he died. When I began taking pictures later I wanted Peruche to take the hat off and replace it with some kind of genuine Jivaro headdress. Everything must be authentic in pictures of primitives. But the old *curaka* would have none of it. He loved the hat, he thought he looked fine in the hat, and he intended to wear the hat always. Above all, he wanted his picture taken in his fine new hat.

I have a few hundred feet of film about Peruche, and many photographs, and in every one he wears the funny hat. Somehow, it looks right on him.

He was almost as pleased with another gift I brought—eyebrow pencils. It had seemed like an obvious gift to me when I saw Indians painting black lines on their faces with sharp sticks dipped in a dye laboriously made from berries of the genipa bush. I should have brought a gross to the Jivaro country, for nothing could have made a bigger hit.

At first Peruche was somewhat sceptical about my taking pictures. He, too, had the Jivaro superstition that pictures took away part of a man or a

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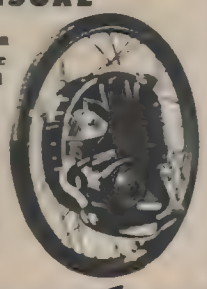

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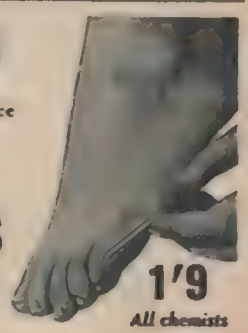

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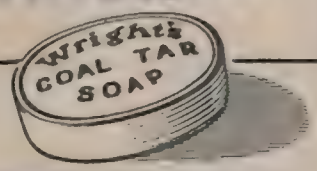

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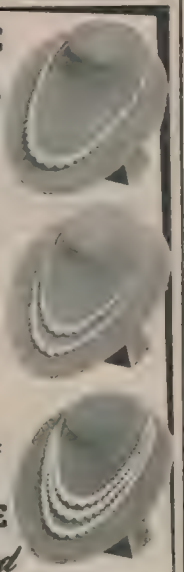

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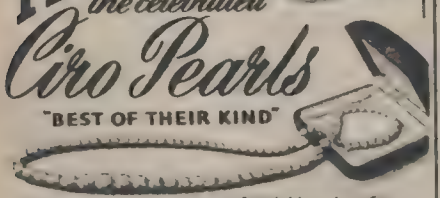

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man's soul, but was willing to be convinced to the contrary.

Tuki, the medicine man of Peruche's clan, did not really approve of pictures, but once Peruche had made up his mind that they were all right no arguments could change him. Any great *curaka* is probably something of a *wishinu* himself; even though he may not have gone through the arduous training of a full-fledged *brujo* when a youth. He learns much of a medicine man's powers and comes to possess strong influence over spirits just because he has lived so long and has been so successful. Peruche therefore was not as swayed by his *wishinu* as he probably was when younger.

Tuki finally allowed me to take some pictures of him, but without very good grace, and I always had the idea that he thought Peruche was too unreserved in his hospitality to me, too open-hearted in taking me into his family.

Couldn't Eat Weevils

I ate my meals with the Jivaros. The fish served by the Indians was usually good; the yuca was nourishing but very tiresome after a while; plantains, similar to our bananas, were always cooked and were enjoyable; meat stews sometimes were good, sometimes not. I could not eat the weevils, ants, bird entrails, and other special delicacies.

Sometimes I had to supplement these meals by dipping into my small store of tinned food. This was because I drank no *nijimanche*—the native beer. This contains much nutritive value and Jivaros drink several quarts of it a day.

Peruche wanted to start the picture-taking right away, and I was perfectly willing. But it started to rain again the day after our arrival, and rained for three days. Then the sun came out and the jungle became as dry as it ever gets. I took pictures of the activities around the *jivaria*—men weaving, women making pottery, chewing yuca for brewing the *nijimanche*. Peruche hovered around watching almost every move I made, and was happy to appear in as many pictures as possible. But he wanted something special, and so did I.

It had been my plan to wait a few days before suggesting the re-creation of certain rituals and dances. But Peruche beat me to it. He had a sense of the dramatic, the unusual, that smoothed the road for me over and over again.

"What special pictures do you want to take?" Peruche asked.

"Hunting," I said, "and fishing, and—most of all—scenes of the *tsantsa* festival." It was the first time I had mentioned head-hunting and the *tsantsa*, the shrunken head, and I wondered if Peruche would be reluctant to talk about it. But Peruche did not even blink. He just looked puzzled.

On With The Dance

"But—we have no *tsantsa* feast planned," he said. "There have been no wars for months, and I know of no one who has taken a head."

"I don't mean a real *tsantsa* feast," I said. "And I know I can't take pictures of the whole thing, which must last four or five days. Anyway, most of the dances are held at night, aren't they?"

"Yes, yes, dancing and drinking all night," Peruche said, smiling happily. "But many things happen during the day, too. It is a pity you were not here for my last feast, six months ago."

"Do you still have the *tsantsa?*" I asked.

"Yes, I still have it."

"Could we use it for some kind of dance?" I asked. "Couldn't you and your clan dance again the dance they did when you brought home the *tsantsa?*"

He got the idea right away. "Yes, the victory dance!" he cried. "We would dance just as we danced then—just as we have danced every time."

"Here in the clearing, in the daytime?" I asked.

"Of course, so you can take pictures. But we want many people, not just my family. Many people come to my victory dances, to my *tsantsa* feasts."

NEXT WEEK: I learn how the Jivaros shrink the heads of their victims

"Couldn't be a touch of 'flu, I suppose . . . ?"

KNIGHT ERRANT OF THE FIFTH

Continued from page 25

in the middle of the green. He could smell smoke. Blast! They'd lit it! He could hear the faint, ominous crackling low down.

The boys and their sisters, their big brothers and the one or two adults who had gathered to see the fun, were struck dumb at the sight of quiet, staid Mr. Foster, usually so completely unaware of the rest of the world, appearing out of the gloaming, carrying an enormous pole, like a medieval knight at a tilt.

They turned and stared.

"Hey! Stop! Must have my jacket. On the guy," he said breathlessly.

"But Mrs. Foster said . . ." wailed one.

"Can't help that. You all come and help, d'you hear! We shan't hurt the fire." And he rushed round to the front of the pile, fixed the hook of the prop into the bar of the old chair on which the guy sat, ordered the children to take hold and heave. The spectacle was so astonishing that they obeyed, rising, as most children do, to the challenge.

"Something important in the pocket," he explained. "Now, when I say heave. . . . One—two—three—heave!"

The chair was lifted upon the prop, tottered, waved, fell with a crash, while the flames began to breathe and glow inside the pile. The boys cheered, not understanding, but ready for any excitement.

"Come on, just take his jacket off," said Bruce, briskly stripping the guy, "and then we'll put him back again. Crikey! Seem to recognize that hat, don't I? Did my wife give you that, too? There, no harm done—very fine guy. Who made it?"

Everyone claimed to have made the guy, while all their fingers fumbled and scrabbled to rescue the jacket.

"There we are, boys. Now the headache is going to be getting it back."

THE guy, of course, was tied into the chair. So they fixed the crook of the prop into a piece of the rope, all laid hands on it again, and, racing with the flames, got the chair in position on top of the pile once more. The guy gazed solemnly up to heaven instead of out at the crowd.

"Awfully sorry, can't help that," Bruce apologized, collecting the jacket. "But he'll burn just as well."

"Stay and see the fire, sir?"

"What was in the pockets?"

"No, I want my supper," Bruce said. "A five-pound note," he added, winking.

"Coo! It wasn't, I bet! What was it, a jewel?"

They crowded round, wanting another thrill. But he brushed them off with a laugh, which was as much at himself as at them. He felt exhilarated, triumphant, young. The gusty wind blew his hair about, fanned the flames of the fire, made his wife's prop sway on his shoulder, as he walked back over the green towards the lane, giggling to himself at the extraordinary picture he must have presented. Over his arm hung the jacket, retrieved.

"Got it, darling," he said, laughing, as he strode in, his hair all over his forehead and his spectacles sprayed with the fine rain.

"Bruce, I'm terribly sorry, I'd no idea—I watched you from upstairs. It was magnificent."

He was fiddling about, feeling in the inside pocket. His face crumpled up with further amusement. The pocket was empty.

"Did you find a letter?" he said, rather sheepishly.

"Well, of course, I emptied the pockets, dear—I naturally wouldn't have given it away with anything in it. You didn't wait for me to explain. I thought it was the jacket you were upset about. . . ."

"It was, both. Oh, thank you." He took the letter she handed him and looked at her uncertainly.

"It's all right, I was very honourable. I didn't read anything."

He smiled, abashed. "That's all right, my love, you're quite welcome to. It was the only real love letter you ever wrote me."

HE was sitting on the floor, the jacket over his knees. His wife sat down heavily in the hall chair.

"And this jacket," he said, patting it, "is me, when I got the letter. Goodness, full of hopes and ideals, dreams, plans and so forth." He waved his hand with abandon in the air above his head. "I used to write poetry in my spare time, d'you remember? And the play! Remember? We were going to write a play, make thousands, and go abroad and——"

"Oh, Bruce," she said, "and you stayed in the office! A safe office job! When you always used to say, 'Heaven preserve me from a safe office job. . . .'"

"Yes, I did, didn't I? Do you remember, this was the jacket I walked all over Wales in? When we were engaged?"

"I didn't know. I'd forgotten."

"What a man will do for his first grand idea of himself! I never thought I could have been such a fool as that, rushing along with that blessed prop. Oh, Lord," he spluttered. "What the children can think!" He slapped his thigh, struggled up, hung the jacket on a peg and followed his wife into the dining-room.

She was at the window, watching the glow in the sky above the green. She gave him a stricken look.

"Come on, dear, don't look so star-struck," he said. "I'm hungry. Where are the children? Out? It's much more comfortable being how we are, nearly middle-aged and safe. It's only that I like to remember there was a me like that."

She imagined the showers of sparks rushing up against the dark, damp sky, the consuming, passionate flames topping the pile in the distance, and thought of the lank figure, raincoat flapping, clothes prop waving, rallying the little boys to the ecstatic rescue of the jacket and the letter: a mythical and poetic act, the act of a hero.

"There still is," she said. THE END

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THE SMUGGLER ON FLIGHT 920

Continued from page 14

and smoothed the fair hair from her forehead. "And we'll get you out of this, don't worry."

When he had gone, Mary laid a hand protectively on the thick folds of the coat. She felt the rigid bars of gold sewn into the lining, and again her fevered mind was fired by nightmare thinking. This man would get her and all the others to safety, she was sure of that. But what then?

Then she would have to do her duty. She would say: "Oh, yes—he brought us through, practically single-handed. If it hadn't been for him . . . but he's a smuggler, so of course you must arrest him. But please don't send him away for too long."

That was what she was going to have to do, sooner or later. And then his mouth would clamp even more bitterly, and if he ever smiled again it would never be at her. Mary's own mouth quivered, and the forest around blurred and shook with the tears in her eyes.

WITH two stretchers to carry now, they made only about a mile more that day. When they camped for the night, Matthews supervised the doling out of the meagre rations, and then strolled over to the three malcontents. They were sitting apart from the others, and they glared up at him.

"What do you want now?" Cousins asked truculently.

"Your boots," Matthews said. "Take them off and chuck them out in the middle. You might feel like doing a moonlight flit, and we should hate to wake up in the morning and find you gone."

They cursed him, but they did as they were told. They hurled their boots savagely into a heap. Matthews shuffled them together, and sat down with his back against the pile.

"Good night, boys," he said. "Don't try anything funny in the night, because two of you may get away with it, but there'll be one left for the ants to pick."

There was no reply, no sound in the gathering darkness except the high-pitched whirring of insects and the hard breathing of one of the women.

Dawn came. The march was resumed. And now their progress was pitifully slow. The gun could keep order, but it couldn't supply stamina and strength. With two women to be carried, the bearers began to wilt. The pace of the party was reduced to a miserable crawl.

Matthews kept near Mary on her stretcher, and on one of the frequent halts he squatted down close beside her.

"I've got an idea those three are going to jump me any minute," he said. His tone was casual. "They'll probably try it on when I give the order to move again. Notice how they've positioned themselves?" He glanced idly at the three men seated in a triangle about him. "I'm going to slip you the gun. If anything happens, I want you to shoot. Don't be afraid to kill. It'll be self-defence. And aim low. The gun kicks upwards."

Almost at once he got up and moved away. And Mary was left with the gun. She felt the butt hard in her hand. She knew what it meant, that she was committed to shoot a man, to shoot and kill him. And scarcely twenty-four hours before she would have recoiled from the thought of drowning a kitten. The measure of their plight was that she felt no horror, no repugnance, only a fearful doubt that she might miss.

Matthews stood in the centre of the party. "Come on," he said. "Let's go."

He moved to take up his position as bearer. The others struggled painfully up.

And then Cousins dived in a flying tackle. Matthews's feet were swept from under him. The other two plunged in with clumsy haste. In a second Matthews was pinned helpless, arms spread-eagled, face in the dirt.

"Now, mister almighty gunman—now we'll see whether we're going or not!" Cousins crowed. He was kneeling in triumph on Matthews's back. He jerked his head at the other two. "Get hold of some of the kit, and be quick about it."

Mary sat up on the stretcher. "Let him alone!" she snapped.

THE three men leaped away from Matthews as though stung. They stoop gaping at the gun in Mary's hand.

"Let him alone or I'll shoot," she said.

"Good girl," exclaimed Matthews in a choked voice. He was quickly up and at Mary's side. In a moment he had his gun again.

"You damned fools," he said. "Won't you ever learn?" He waved the gun at his attackers, who stood together in a defensive group. "Now get moving, and let's have an end of the funny stuff. If there's any more of it, someone will really get hurt."

The rest of the party had sunk down again to the ground. They had witnessed the incident apathetically, without interest. All that it had meant to them was a few minutes more to rest. Now they staggered up again,

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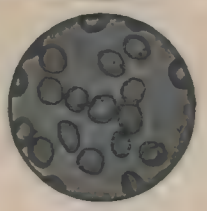

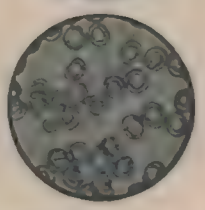

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and the snail's pace trek was resumed.

It was some two hours later, when they seemed utterly lost in the remote depths of the forest, that a clump of bushes ahead folded back silently, and a giant native stepped forward and confronted the leaders of the party.

One of the women screamed. Everyone stopped, motionless. The native stared at them woodenly. Then he grunted a guttural word of command and a black ring of twenty or thirty more natives came from the undergrowth to hem the white people in.

Only Matthews seemed unaffected by the frozen paralysis. He walked slowly forward and raised his arms in a gesture of peace. "We have hurt people," he called out. "Sick people. You take us to white man, plenty money."

The big native's eyes roved cunningly over the party. Then he nodded. Immediately the others closed in. In a moment the stretchers were hoisted on to oily black shoulders, the baggage swung up on to woolly black heads. The caravan moved off.

Matthews marched beside Mary, holding her limp hand in his. "So we made it," he said. He smiled, but his eyes were anxious and wary.

After an hour's tramping, they came to a native village, a disappointing, squalid collection of huts, with a silent crowd of women and children to stare round-eyed at them. There was no friendliness. The newcomers were left, guarded, in the middle of the compound, while the big native went off to the chief's hut.

Matthews was still at Mary's side. He seemed loth to leave her now. "I don't get it," he said. "What the hell are they so sullen and suspicious about?" The gun was in his hand again, and again his mouth took that set, grim line. "Maybe I'd better go and find out what goes on."

Mary made a quick, apprehensive gesture to restrain him. But he had gone, flourishing the gun at the native who tried to stop him with a spear.

He was gone a long time, and all the time the others were tense with apprehension. They were still surrounded by natives, watched by a folk as silent as the forest, furtive and frightened.

The group of whites shrank together under that silent, watchful gaze, and the men were holding themselves ready for a rush.

Mary closed her eyes and prayed that Matthews would be safe. Matthews came back. He sat down with the others, ostentatiously nursing the gun.

"The chief speaks English," he said. "That is, if he is a chief. Personally, I don't like the look of this lot at all. I think we've hit some sort of renegade settlement. My guess is that more than half of them are jailbirds. The boss himself certainly is. He's still got fetter marks on his ankles and wrists. But"—Matthews paused and looked round him with a somewhat bitter smile—"we're getting bearers to the next village."

There was an open-mouthed silence.

"It's about four days off," Matthews went on. "And I've persuaded the chief to come with us, just to make sure we get there. I think he's satisfied we shall simply say we were guided by a native."

Miraculously, the tension eased. There was suddenly an atmosphere of eagerness and excitement. And someone laughed a free, natural laugh for the first time since they had crawled out of the wreck.

"But how did you manage it?" one of the women asked Matthews.

Matthews's eyes narrowed momentarily. "The chief just happened to be open to persuasion," he said. "Like most of us, I reckon."

He glanced across at Cousins. And Cousins grinned. "There's nothing like a bullet for the last word in an argument," Cousins said.

Matthews got up. "We've still got to look out for this lot," he said. "So we'll post guards tonight, and every night until we get where we're going. Apart from that, the best thing we can do now is get some sleep."

Matthews himself took the first watch. While the others settled down, he sat alert and wakeful beside Mary's litter. Some of the natives came to stand and stare, but they kept at a respectful distance.

Far into the night Mary turned and twisted, her mind wandering in and out of waking consciousness. She still had her problem, and another, too. What happens, she now had to ask herself, if you fall for a man in another world, even if he has gentle hands and a mouth that can be something other than a bitter twist? *May I introduce Mr. Matthews, hero, thief, gold smuggler and gunman. He's holding my hand now, and every now and then he bathes my face with water. Nice of him, isn't it?*

She drifted finally into sleep, but in the morning her eyes were bright with fever.

It took them three and a half days to reach the next village, sixty-odd hours of slogging. More than ever during that last stage Matthews was their strength and their protection. And he scarcely seemed to sleep at all at night. He drove himself far beyond the normal limit of his strength. There was a feverish gleam in his eyes, too, but it was the fever of determination more than anything else. He was dominated by his purpose to get the party through.

At about noon on the fourth day

they heard the distant barking of a dog, and the giant native chief raised his hand. They had arrived.

The party halted. Matthews walked over to the chief. Then the natives were silently and suddenly gone. And Matthews returned to stand among the men and women he had brought back to the verge of civilization. Despite his tattered clothing and the scrub of beard round his face, he looked oddly dignified. Mary, looking up at him from her litter, her face burning high with fever, thought he looked almost Biblical. Like Moses with his shrunken flock.

A brief respite, and then they dragged themselves forward again on the last, short lap.

There was quite a reception for them in the village. There was a young district commissioner there on his rounds, and he stared in amazement at the gaunt crew that came staggering in with a crowd of villagers supporting them.

"My God!" he exclaimed. "We'd heard about the missing aircraft, of course, but they're searching hundreds of miles away to the west, some native report of a crash, I think." He checked himself, then said more soberly: "Any casualties? Anyone left behind?"

"They're all here that survived the crash," Matthews said. "They've all come through."

"Right. Then we can get you out straight away. I've got a jeep on a sort of road at the other end of the village. I can have you evacuated in a matter of hours."

It was then that Matthews pitched forward on his face.

He should have stayed like that, unconscious until he awoke in a hospital bed, but in fact he came round half way along a jolting track, with Mary beside him in the back of the jeep.

He came round to find her burning hand in his, and to hear her whisper: "The gold—where is the gold? It's not in your coat any more."

He turned his head to look at her. "You knew about that?" he said.

"We had a radio message to say you were to be detained, suspected of smuggling gold. And I felt it in your coat, but it's not there now."

He was silent. Then he began to laugh, weakly at first, then louder and louder, uncontrollably, until the driver of the jeep turned to look at them and they swerved across the track.

And when the spasm had passed, he said: "I wasn't so smart, then, if they were as quick on to me as that." His grip tightened on Mary's hand. "Listen, my dear. This was my first run on the wrong side of the law. It was to be easy profits, quick returns. Not so easy, and not so quick, it seems." He paused, and when he spoke again he sounded unutterably weary. "Maybe I'm not cut out for that sort of thing after all," he said.

He closed his eyes. He was exhausted, but his face looked relaxed and free. The thin grimness of the mouth was gone. And, watching over him anxiously, Mary felt she knew the essential truth about him. Bitter, disillusioned, the world's gold had seemed to him the only thing worth while. Until he had saved those lost souls from the forest, and found himself again in the process.

Matthews opened his eyes again. "The gold?" he said, as though she was still asking him about it. "Well—it came in useful. That big black's pushing back into the bush with about four thousand pounds' worth of the stuff weighing him down."

"That was the price—of our safety?" Mary asked.

"That was the price," he said. "And I think I got value for money."

Matthews's grip on her hand tightened again. "Do you think I might come and visit you in hospital?" he asked. "When you're washed and clean and decent?"

Her eyes were suddenly burning with tears. "I'll run a temperature until you do," she told him.

The jeep climbed on to a proper road, and the smooth miles began to flow behind them. THE END

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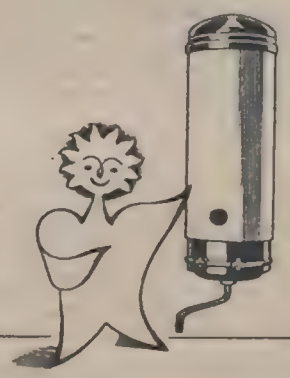

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OUT THURSDAY, NOV. 12

HORNBLOWER OF THE ATROPOS

Continued from page 20

end," said McCullum. "These fellows here are always afraid of 'em. But I'll do it."

The bulky figure of Eisenbeiss loomed up beside the cot. He put one hand on McCullum's forehead and the other on his wrist.

"Take your hands off me!" snarled McCullum. "I'm busy."

"You must not do too much," said Eisenbeiss. "Excitement increases the morbid humours."

"Morbid humours be damned!" exclaimed McCullum. "And you be damned, too."

"Don't be a fool, man," said Hornblower, his patience exhausted. "He saved your life yesterday. Don't you remember how sick you were? 'It hurts. It hurts.' That's what you were saying."

Hornblower found his voice piping in imitation of McCullum's the day before; he turned his face feebly from side to side, like McCullum's on the pillow. He was aware that it was an effective bit of mimicry, and even McCullum was a trifle abashed by it.

"Sick I may have been," he said, "but I'm well enough now."

Hornblower looked across at Eisenbeiss.

"Let Mr. McCullum have five more minutes," he said. "Now, Mr. McCullum, you were talking about leather fuse-hoses. Will you please explain how they are used?"

LATER, Hornblower came forward to where the gunner and his mates were squatting on the deck, at work upon the fuse-hose in accordance with McCullum's instructions.

"You are making a thorough job of those seams, I hope, Mr. Clout," he said.

"Aye aye, sir," said Clout.

They had an old sail spread out to sit on, for the purpose of saving the spotless deck from the warm pitch in the iron pot beside them.

"Five seconds to the foot, this quick-match burns, sir. You said one foot of slow-match, sir?"

"I did."

Hornblower bent to look at the work. The leather hose was in irregular lengths, from three to five feet; it was typical of the cross-grained ways of Nature that animals could not provide longer pieces of leather than that. One of the gunner's mates was at work with a slender wooden bodkin, dragging the end of a vast length of quick-match through a section of hose. When the bodkin emerged, he proceeded to slip the hose along the quick-match until it joined the preceding section.

"Easy with that, now," said Clout. "We don't want a break in that match."

The other gunner's mate set to work with the needle and palm to sew and double-sew the new length to its neighbour.

The joint completed, Clout proceeded to apply warm pitch liberally over the joint and down the seam of the new section. Eventually there would be a hundred and twenty feet of hose joined and pitched, and with quick-match threaded all the way through it.

"I've picked a couple of sound kegs, sir," said Clout. "Fifty-pound kegs, they are. I have bags of dry sand to fill 'em up."

"Very well," said Hornblower.

Thirty pounds of powder was what McCullum wanted for his explosive charge, no more and no less.

"I don't want to shatter the wreck to pieces," he had said. "I only want to split her open."

That was a part of McCullum's special knowledge; Hornblower could not possibly have guessed how much powder, at a depth of a hundred feet, would achieve this result.

"Send me word the moment you are ready," he said, and turned back aft again.

Here was Turner, newly come from the shore, hovering about to attract his attention.

"Well, Mr. Turner?"

Turner kept his distance, his manner indicating that he had something very private to say. He spoke in a low voice when Hornblower walked over to him.

"Please, sir, it's the mudir. He wants to visit you. I can't make him out, but there's something he wants."

"What did you tell him?"

"I said—I'm sorry, sir, but I didn't know what else to do—I said you'd be delighted. There's something fishy, I think. He said he'd come at once."

"He did, did he?"

Things were bound to be fishy in these troubled waters, thought Hornblower, with a simultaneous disapproval of the style of that sentiment.

"Midshipman of the watch!"

"Sir!"

"What do you see over towards the town?"

Smiley trained his glass across the bay. "Boat putting out, sir. She's the same lateen we saw before."

"Any flag?"

"Yes, sir. Red. Turkish colours, it looks like."

"Very well. Mr. Jones, we're going to have an official visitor. You may pipe the side for him."

"Aye aye, sir."

"Now, Mr. Turner, you don't know what the mudir wants?"

"No, sir. He wanted to see you, urgently, it seems like. *'Il capitano'* was all he'd say when we landed—the market was supposed to be ready for us, but it wasn't. What he wanted was to see the captain, and so I said you'd see him."

"He gave no hint?"

"No, sir. He wouldn't say. But he was agitated, I could see."

"Well, we'll know soon enough," said Hornblower.

The mudir mounted to the deck with a certain dignity, despite the difficulties the awkward ascent presented to his old legs. He looked keenly about him as he came on board; whether or not he understood the compliment that was being paid him by the bos'n's mates and the sideboys could not be determined. There was a keen, hawk-like face above the white

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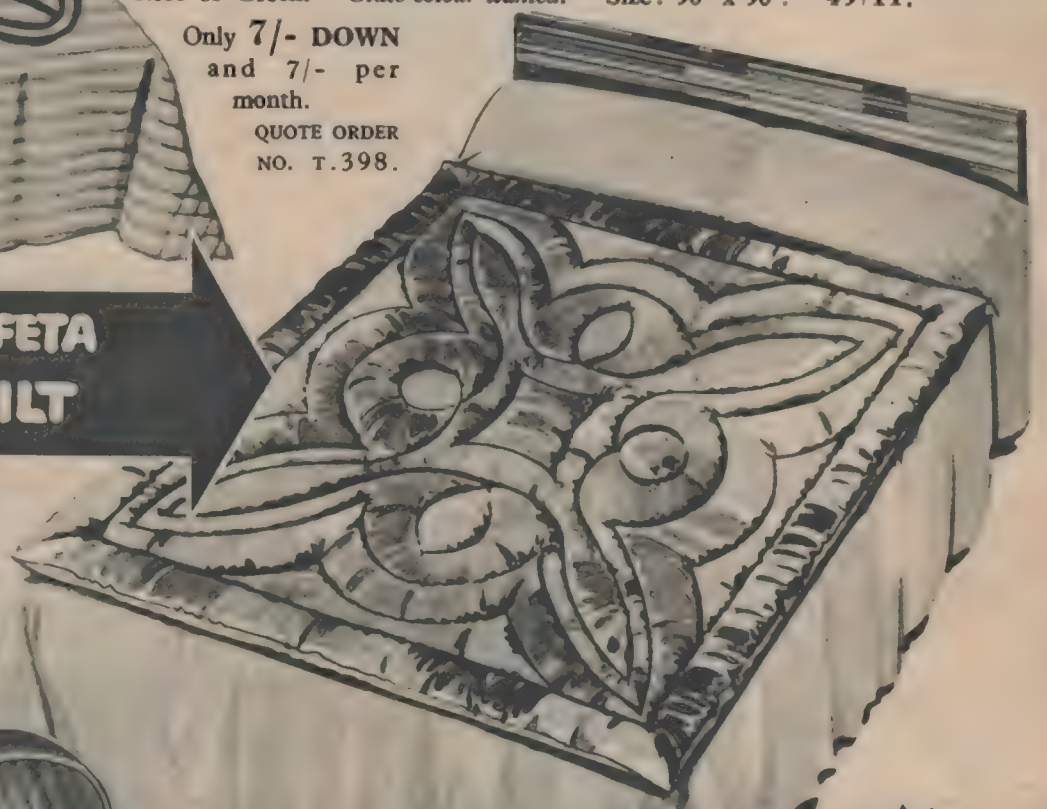

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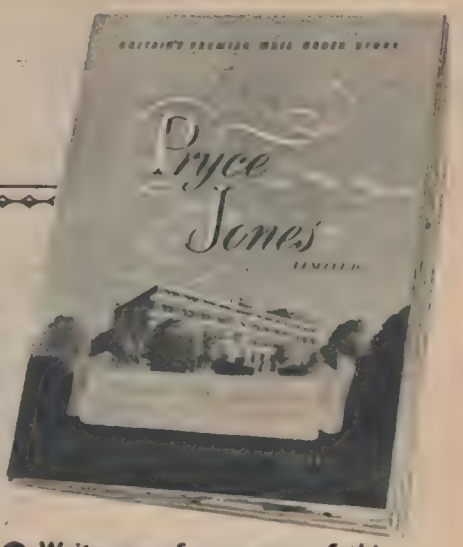

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beard, and a pair of lively dark eyes took in the scene about him without revealing whether it was a familiar one or not. Hornblower touched his hat and the mudir replied with a graceful gesture of his hand to his face.

"Ask him if he will come below," said Hornblower. "I'll lead the way."

Down in the cabin, Hornblower offered a chair, with a bow, and the mudir seated himself. Hornblower sat opposite him with Turner at his side. The mudir spoke and Turner translated.

"He hopes God has given you the gift of health, sir," said Turner.

"Make the correct reply," said Hornblower.

As he spoke, he met the glance of the sharp brown eyes and smiled politely.

"Now he's asking you if you have had a prosperous voyage, sir," reported Turner.

"Say whatever you think fit," answered Hornblower.

The conversation proceeded from one formal politeness to another. This was the way of the Levant, Hornblower knew. It could be neither dignified nor tactful to announce one's business in one's opening sentences.

"Should we offer him a drink?" asked Hornblower.

"Well, sir, it's usual over business to offer coffee."

"Then don't you think we'd better?"

"You see, sir, it's the coffee—it'll be different from what he calls coffee."

"We can hardly help that. Give the order, if you please."

The conversation continued, still without reaching any point. It was interesting to note how an intelligent and mobile face like the mudir's could give no hint at all of any emotion behind it. But the coffee brought about a change. The sharp eyes took in the thick cups, the battered pewter coffee pot, while the face remained impassive. The mudir went through the ceremony of polite refusal and then grateful acceptance; but the tasting of the coffee effected a transformation.

WILLY-NILLY, the mudir could not prevent an expression of surprise, even though he instantly brought his features under control again. He proceeded to sweeten his coffee to a syrup with sugar.

"There ought to be little cakes and sweetmeats, too, sir," said Turner. "But we couldn't offer him blackstrap and biscuit."

"I suppose not," said Hornblower.

The mudir sipped cautiously at his coffee again, and resumed his speech.

"He says you have a very fine ship, sir," said Turner. "I think he is coming to the point soon."

"Thank him and tell him what a wonderful village he has, if you think that's the right thing," said Hornblower.

The mudir sat back in his chair—it was plain that he was not accustomed to chairs—studying first Hornblower's face and then Turner's. Then he spoke again; his voice was well modulated, well controlled.

"He's asking if Atropos is going to stay long, sir," said Turner.

It was the question Hornblower was expecting.

"Say that I have not completed my stores yet," he said.

He was quite sure that the preliminary operations of salvage, sweeping for the wreck, buoying it, and sending down the divers, had escaped observation, or at least would be quite unintelligible from the shore. He did not take his eyes from the mudir's face as Turner translated and the mudir replied.

"He says he presumes you will be leaving as soon as you've done that," said Turner.

"Tell him it's likely."

"He says this would be a good place to wait for information about French ships, sir. The fishing-boats often come in with news."

"Tell him I have my orders."

The suspicion began to form in Hornblower's mind that the mudir did not want Atropos to leave. Perhaps he wanted to keep him here until an ambush could be laid, until the guns at the fort could be manned, until the vali returned with the local army. This was a good way to carry on a diplomatic conversation. He could watch the mudir all the time, while any unguarded statement of Turner's could be disavowed on the grounds of poor translation, if no other way.

"Mummy, guess what's inside a sofa cushion!"

"We can keep an eye on the Rhodes Channel from here, sir, he says," went on Turner. "It's the most likely course for any Frenchy. It looks as if he wants to get his twenty guineas, sir."

"Maybe so," said Hornblower, trying to convey by his tone that he saw no need for Turner to contribute to the conversation. "Say that my orders give me very little discretion."

With the conversation taking this turn, it was obvious that the best tactics would be to display a reluctance that might with great difficulty be overcome. Hornblower hoped that Turner's command of *lingua franca* was equal to this demand upon it.

The mudir replied with more animation than he had previously shown; it was as if he were about to show his hand.

"He wants us to stay here, sir," said Turner. "If we do, there'll be much better supplies coming in from the country."

That was not his real reason, obviously.

"No," said Hornblower. "If we can't get the supplies, we'll go without them."

HORNBLOWER was having to be careful about the expression on his face; he had to say these things to Turner as if he really meant them—the mudir was not letting anything escape his notice.

"Now he's coming out in the open, sir," said Turner. "He's asking us to stay."

"Then ask him why he wants us to."

This time the mudir spoke for a long time.

"So that's it, sir," reported Turner. "Now we know. There are pirates about."

"Tell me exactly what he said, if you please, Mr. Turner."

"There are pirates along the coast, sir," explained Turner, accepting the rebuke. "A fellow called Michael—Michael the—the Slayer of Turks, sir. I've heard of him. He raids these coasts. A Greek, of course. He was at Fettech two days back. That's just along the coast, sir."

"And the mudir's afraid this'll be the next place he's going to raid?"

"Yes, sir. I'll ask him so as to make sure, sir," added Turner, when Hornblower glanced at him.

The mudir was quite eloquent now that he had taken the plunge. Turner had to listen for a long time before he could resume his translation.

"Michael burns the houses, sir, and takes the women and cattle. He's the sworn enemy of the Mohammedans. That's where the vali is with the local army, sir. He went to head off Michael, but he guessed wrong. He went to Adalia, and that's a week's march away, sir."

"I see."

With Atropos lying in Marmorice Bay, a pirate would never venture in, and the mudir and his people were safe as long as she stayed there. The purpose of the mudir's visit was plain: he wanted to persuade Hornblower to stay until this Michael was at a safe distance again. It was a remarkable piece of good fortune; it was, thought Hornblower, ample compensation for the freak of fate which had left McCullum wounded in a duel. But he must on no account show any pleasure.

"It's a stroke of luck for us, sir," said Turner.

"Please keep your conclusions to yourself, Mr. Turner," said Hornblower bitingly.

The tone of his voice and Turner's crestfallen expression puzzled the mudir, who had not ceased to watch them closely. But he waited patiently for the unbelievers to make the next move.

"No," said Hornblower decisively, "tell him I can't do it."

At Hornblower's shake of the head, the mudir actually showed a little dismay even before Turner translated. He stroked his white beard and spoke again, choosing his words carefully.

"He's offering to bribe us, sir," said Turner. "Five lambs or kids for every day we stay here."

"That's better," said Hornblower. "Tell him I'd rather have money."

It was the mudir's turn to shake his head when he heard what Turner had to say. He looked, to Hornblower's searching eye, like a man quite sincere.

"He says there isn't any money, sir. The vali took all there was when he was here last."

"He has our twenty guineas, anyway. Tell him I want them back, and six lambs a day—no kids—and I'll stay."

That was how it was decided in the end. With Turner escorting the mudir back in the launch, Hornblower went forward to inspect the gunners' work. It was nearly completed. A hundred-odd feet of hose, carefully coiled, lay on the deck, and one end disappeared into a powder-keg covered over with canvas which the gunner was smearing thickly with pitch. Hornblower stooped to examine what must be the weakest point, where the canvas cover of the keg was sewn round the hose.

"That's as good as I can make it, sir," said the gunner. "But it's a mighty long length of hose."

At a hundred feet below water the pressures were enormous. A minute, undetectable pinprick anywhere in the fabric, and water would be forced in.

"We can try it," said Hornblower. "The sooner the better."

IT was always like that—"the sooner the better" might be found written on a naval officer's heart like Queen Mary's Calais. Man the gig, see that all necessary equipment was packed into it, herd the divers into the bows after their last-minute instructions from McCullum, and start off without a minute wasted.

"Easy!" he ordered, and the gig drifted slowly up to the moored plank which marked the accessible point of the wreck underneath.

Looney knew his business. The canvas-covered powder-keg lay beside him; it was bound with line, and Looney took another short length of line, secured one end to the keg, passed the line round the mooring line of the buoy, and secured the other end to the keg again. He checked to see that the free end of the fuse-hose was properly fastened to the empty keg that was to buoy it up, and then gave a piping order to one of his colleagues, who stood up to take off his clothes. Looney laid hold of the powder-keg, but it was too heavy for his spindly arms.

"Help him, you two," said Hornblower to the two seamen nearest. "See that the line's clear and see that the hose is clear, too."

Under Looney's direction the powder-keg was lifted up and lowered over the side.

"Let go! Handsomely! Handsomely!" ordered Hornblower.

It was a tense moment—one more tense moment—to watch the powder-keg sink below the choppy surface. By the line attached to it the seamen lowered it slowly down, the fuse-hose uncoiling after it as the keg sank. The loop of line which Looney had passed round the mooring-line of the buoy made certain that the keg would sink to the right place.

"Bottom, sir," said a seaman, as the lowering line went slack in his hands. Several feet of hose remained in the boat.

The diver was sitting on the opposite gunwale; he carried a sheath knife on a string round his naked waist, and he took in his hands the cannon-ball that Looney gave him. Then he lowered himself over and vanished under the surface. They waited until

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"I think he wants you to take him for his walk"

he came up; they waited while the next diver went down and came up again; they waited while Looney took his turn, too.

Dive succeeded dive; apparently it was not too easy an operation to move the powder-keg to exactly the right place under the break of the Speedwell's poop. But presumably, down below the surface, the thing was achieved in the end. Looney came up from what seemed to be an extra-long dive; he had to be helped over the gunwale and he lay gasping in the bows for some time, recovering. Then at last he sat up and made to Hornblower the unmistakable gesture of handling flint and steel.

"Strike a light," said Hornblower to Leadbitter. In all his life he had never properly acquired the knack of it.

LEADBITTER opened the tinderbox, and struck, and struck again. It did not take him more than six times before he succeeded. He bent and blew the spark on the tinder into life, took the piece of slow-match and caught the fire on it, blew that into life, too, and looked to Hornblower for further orders.

"I'll do it," said Hornblower.

Leadbitter handed him the glowing match, and Hornblower sat with it in his hand for a second while he checked once more to see that all was ready. He was tingling with excitement.

"Stand by with the cask!" he said. "Leadbitter, have the stopper ready."

There were four or five inches of quick-match hanging out of the fuse-hose; Hornblower dabbed the glowing match upon it.

A second's hesitation, and it took fire. Hornblower watched the spark run along the quick-match and vanish down into the hose.

"Stopper it!" said Hornblower, and Leadbitter forced the wooden stopper into the end of the hose, grinding down upon the brittle ashes of the match.

At five seconds to the foot, the fire was now, he hoped, travelling down the hose, down, down, far below the level of the sea. At the far end, next to the powder-keg, there was a foot of slow-match. That burned at five minutes to the foot; they had plenty of time—no need for feverish haste, however great the urge to hurry.

"Over with it!" said Hornblower, and Leadbitter picked up the empty cask and lowered it gently into the water. It floated there, holding up above the surface the stoppered end of the fuse-hose.

"Oars!" said Hornblower. "Give way!"

The gig swung away from the floating keg. The spark was still travelling along the quick-match, Hornblower presumed; it would be some seconds yet before it even reached the slow-match down there by the wreck of the Speedwell. He remembered to take the time by his watch.

"Take her back to the ship," he ordered Leadbitter; he looked back to where the empty cask bobbed on the surface.

McCullum had said: "I advise you to keep clear of the explosion." Apparently the explosion of a barrel of powder, even far down under the water, created a turmoil on the surface that would endanger the gig. Beside the ship they would be a quarter of a mile away; that should be safe enough. When the bowman hooked on to the main chains of the Atropos, Hornblower looked at his watch again. It was exactly five minutes since he had seen the spark passing into the end of the fuse-hose. The explosion could be expected at any time from now.

Naturally, the side of the ship was lined with every idler who could find a place there. The preparation of the charge and the fuse had excited gossip throughout the ship.

Hornblower changed his mind about awaiting the explosion in the gig, and mounted to the deck.

"Mr. Jones!" he bellowed. "Is this a raree-show? Keep the hands at work, if you please."

"Aye aye, sir."

He very much wanted to see the explosion himself, but he feared to display curiosity inconsonant with his dignity. And there was the chance—a likely chance, according to McCullum—that there would be no explosion at

Consider your verdict

IN the case on page 30, the judge confirmed that a wife cannot, as a rule, sue her husband in cases of tort—negligence is a tort. But, he said, an act of negligence had clearly been committed, and the café owner could not shelter behind John's immunity. The owner was ordered to pay Harriet £500 damages. (*This is the probable decision, based on actual cases.*)

all. A glance at his watch showed him that it was by now overdue. With an appearance of the utmost indifference he strolled forward to McCullum's bedside, where McCullum was listening to the reports of his divers.

"Nothing as yet?" said McCullum.

"Nothing."

"I never trust a fuse-hose beyond five fathoms," said McCullum, "even when I handle it myself."

Hornblower kept back an irritated answer, and glanced at his watch again.

"Long overdue," he said.

"Water's in that hose. You'll have to use a flying-fuse after all."

"The sooner the better," said Hornblower. "How do I set about it?"

He was glad for the sake of his precious dignity that he had not waited in sight of the men. . . .

This time so many men were wanted for the operation that Hornblower was using the launch instead of the gig. As usual, the three Ceylonese divers were huddled in the bows, but next to them in the bottom of the boat stood an iron pot of melted pitch, and beside it squatted a sailmaker's mate, and Mr. Clout, the gunner, sat amidships with the powder-keg between his legs.

"Carry on, Mr. Clout," said Hornblower.

This was something more than exciting. This was dangerous. The divers stripped themselves for their work, and sat up to begin their exercises of inflating and deflating their lungs. There would not be any time to spare later. Clout took the tinder-box and proceeded to strike a spark upon the tinder, crouching low to shelter it from the small breeze which blew over the surface of the bay. He caught fire upon the slow-match, brought it to a glow, and looked over at Hornblower.

"Carry on, I said," said Hornblower.

CLOUT dabbed the slow-match upon the fuse that protruded through a hole in the end of the powder-keg. Hornblower could hear the faint irregular hissing of the fuse as Clout waited for it to burn down into the hole. Among them now, in the middle of the boat, fire was creeping towards thirty pounds of gunpowder. If there were a few powder grains out of place, if the fuse were the least faulty, there would come a sudden crashing explosion which would blow them and the boat to fragments.

There was not a sound in the boat save the hissing of the fuse. The spark crept down into the hole. The powder-keg at this upper end had a double head, the result of the most careful work by the ship's cooper. In the space between the two heads was coiled the fuse, whose farther end penetrated the inner head to rest amid the powder. Along that coil stapled to the inner head the fire was now moving unseen, creeping round and round on its way to dive down along its final length through the inner head.

Clout took from his pocket the canvas-covered stopper, and dipped it into the warm pitch.

"Make sure of it, Mr. Clout," said Hornblower.

Clout rammed the stopper into the hole in the outer head. The action cut off the sound of the hissing fuse, but everyone in the boat knew that the fire was still pursuing its inexorable way inside. Clout smeared the pitch thickly about the stopper and then moved out of the way.

"Now, my hearty," he said to the sailmaker's mate.

This last needed no urging. Needle and palm in hand, he took Clout's place and sewed up the canvas cover over the top of the keg.

"Keep those stitches small," said Hornblower; the sailmaker's mate, crouching over instant death, was, not unnaturally, nervous. So was Hornblower, but the irritation caused by the previous failure made him anxious that the work should be well done.

The sailmaker's mate finished the last stitch, oversewed it, and, whipping out his sheathknife, cut the twine. There could be hardly anything more harmless in appearance than that

The Iron Highway
Oh, porter, please... the ten o'clock train for Glasgow... I must catch it...
Yes, miss. Er-Platform 8... come on, miss
Ten o'clock, Jim? Platform 7, o'course. There she goes now!
I-I'm sorry, miss, I could have sworn...
THAT EVENING
On the mat again - got about a dozen jobs wrong... I can't seem to remember things... always so tired. And you know how long I sleep!
Oh, Jim, isn't it time you saw the doctor?
AT THE DOCTOR'S
Just shutting your eyes and sleeping isn't necessarily enough in itself; you will wake tired unless you've had completely relaxed sleep
Your brain, your nerves, your whole personality, as well as your body, need rest by night, you know. There's nothing organically wrong with you, so I suggest a cup of Horlicks every night!
AND SO HORLICKS EVERY NIGHT
SOME TIME LATER, ANDREWS HAS BEEN WORKING LATE. ON HIS WAY HOME-
(THINKS) Hullo, that's the Glassborough Limited. Wonder why she's stopped... who's that getting out?
Oldest trick in the world! Waits till the first-class passengers have dinner-makes a good haul-pulls the cord-and gets away before they come back!
Lucky you were working late! I've heard you're a glutton for work these days!
(THINKS) Wouldn't have been working late if I felt tired like I did before I started taking Horlicks!
HORLICKS

canvas-covered keg. It looked stupid, a brainless object, standing there in the boat. Clout was already daubing pitch over the newly sewn end; the sides and other end had been thickly pitched before the keg was put into the launch.

"Now the line," said Hornblower.

As on the previous occasion, a loop of line attached to the keg was passed round the mooring-line of the buoy and secured to the keg again.

"Hoist it, you two. Lower away. Handsomely."

The keg sank below the surface, dangling on the lowering line as the men let it down hand over hand. There was a sudden relief from tension in the boat, marked by a sudden babble of talk.

"Silence!" said Hornblower.

Even though the thing was invisible now, sinking down to the bottom of the bay, it was still deadly—the men did not understand that. One of the divers was already sitting on the gunwale, a cannon-ball in his hands—that was a ridiculous moment for Hornblower to remember that he had not carried out his earlier resolution to get in a store of rocks for that purpose—and his chest expanding and contracting.

"Bottom, sir," announced the seaman at the lowering-line.

THE diver slipped from the gunwale and vanished under the surface. Down there with powder charge and glowing fuse he was in worse peril even than before. "They've seen one of their mates blown to bits using a flying-fuse off Cuddalore," McCullum had said. Hornblower wanted nothing like that to happen now. It occurred to him that if it were to happen, the launch, with him in it, would be on top of the explosion and turmoil, and he wondered what was the mysterious force that always drove him into taking part voluntarily in dangerous adventures. He thought it must be curiosity, and then he realized that it was a sense of shame as well; and it

OH, JOHNNY!

by TIM

never occurred to him that a sense of duty had something to do with it, too.

The second diver was sitting on the gunwale, cannon-ball in hand and breathing deeply, and the moment the first diver's head broke water he let himself slip down and vanished. "I've put the fear of God into 'em," McCullum had said. "I've told 'em that if the charge explodes without being properly placed they'll all get two dozen. An' I've said we're here to stay. No matter how long we try, we get the money up. So you can rely on 'em. They'll do their best."

And they certainly were doing their best. Looney was waiting on the gunwale now, and down he went as soon as the second diver appeared. They wanted to waste no time at all. Not for the first time, Hornblower peered overside in an attempt to see down through the water, unsuccessfully again. It was clear, and the loveliest deep green, but there was just sufficient lop and commotion on the surface to make it impossible to see down. Hornblower had to take it for granted that deep down below, in semi-darkness at least, and amid paralysing cold, Looney was dragging the powder charge towards the wreck and shoving it under the break of the poop.

Looney reappeared, and the first diver instantly went down to replace him. This business was for the divers a gamble with life and death, a losing lottery. If the charge were to explode prematurely, it would be chance that would dictate who would happen to be down there with it at that moment. But surely it could not take long to move the charge a few yards along the bottom and into the right place. And down there, he hoped, the fire was creeping along the coils of the fuse, sandwiched tight between the two barrel-heads.

PHILOSOPHERS had decided that fuses were able to burn in the absence of air—unlike candles—because the nitre that permeated the cord supplied the same combustible substance that air supplied. It was a discovery that went close to solving the problem of life—a human being's life went out like a candle's in the absence of air.

Yet another dive. The fire was hurrying along the fuse. Clout had allowed enough for an hour's burning—it must not be too little, obviously, but also it must not be too much, for the longer the keg was exposed to the water pressure the greater the chance of a weak point giving way and water seeping in. But Clout had pointed out that in that confined space between the barrel-heads the heat would not be able to escape; it would grow hotter and hotter in there and the fuse would burn faster—the fire might even jump from one part of the coil to another. The rate of burning, in other words, was unpredictable.

The diver who had just appeared gave a sharp cry, in time to prevent the next one—Looney—from going down. An eager question and answer, and Looney turned to Hornblower with a waving of hands.

"Get that man on board," ordered Hornblower. "Up anchor!"

A few strokes of the oars got the launch under way. The Ceylonese in the bows were chattering like sparrows at dawn.

"Back to the ship," ordered Hornblower.

He would go straight on board without looking back once; he would not compromise his dignity by awaiting an explosion which might never come. The tiller was put over, and the launch began her steady course towards Atropos.

And then it happened, while Hornblower's back was turned to it. A sullen, muffled roar, not very loud, as if a gun had been fired in a distant cave. Hornblower swung round in his seat just in time to see a bulging wave coming at them, heaving up the stern of the launch. The stern sank and bow rose, the launch pitching violently like a child's toy boat in a tub. The water that surged round them was discoloured and dark. It was only for a few seconds that the violent commotion lasted, and then it passed on, leaving the launch rocking jerkily.

"She's gone up, sir," said Clout, quite unnecessarily.

The hands were chattering as much as the Ceylonese.

"Silence in the boat!" said Hornblower.

He was angry with himself because

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the unexpected sound had caused him to leap in his seat. He glowered at the men, and they fell into a hushed silence.

"Starboard your helm," growled Hornblower. "Give way!"

The launch swung round and retraced its course towards the scene of the explosion, marked by a dirty patch of water. Half a dozen big bubbles rose to the surface and burst as he watched. Then something else came up, and something else—dead fish floating to the surface, their white bellies gleaming under the sky. The launch passed one which was not quite dead; it was making feeble efforts, just perceptible, to right itself and descend again.

"Silence!" repeated Hornblower—the irrepressible chatter had broken out again. "Easy!"

In silence the launch floated over the scene of the explosion. Dead fish, a stain, and nothing else. Nothing else at all.

Hornblower felt a sick feeling of disappointment; there should be fragments from the wreck covering the surface, shattered bits of timber to show that the powder charge had done its work. The fact that there was none was proof that no gap had been blown in the wreck.

His mind was racing into the future. Another charge with another flying-fuse would have to be used, he supposed, and the most brutal threats would have to be employed towards the divers to make them put it into position. They had escaped the last explosion by not more than thirty seconds, he supposed, and they would be chary of running the risk again.

There was a bit of timber! No, it was the plank which had been used as a marker buoy.

"Haul in on that line," said Hornblower to the man pulling stroke oar.

There was only ten feet of line attached to the plank—the line had been broken at that point; so the explosion had effected something, at least. It was ironical that that was all—just a marker buoy torn loose.

"Put on another grapnel and line," ordered Hornblower. They must still be close enough to the spot for the marker to be better than nothing.

Hornblower caught Looney's eye; he seemed willing enough to all appearance. It would save time if an examination of the scant results were made now.

"Looney," said Hornblower, and pointed overside. He had only to point a second time for Looney to nod his agreement and pull off his clothes again. As far as Hornblower could remember, Looney had not yet made his daily quota of five dives. Looney inflated his chest and slipped in, and the launch lay drifting. The little waves that slapped against her sides had a different quality from usual; they had not even the small amount of system arising from the wind that agitated the surface—they seemed to come from all points at once. Hornblower realized that they were the last dying remnants of the turbulence which the explosion had set up.

Up came Looney, his slender bundle of black hair bobbing beside his face. His white teeth showed in what might almost be thought to be a smile, except that, of course, he was gasping for breath.

Looney struck out towards the launch, saying something to his colleagues as he did so, which set them off twittering volubly. Apparently the explosion which had torn the marker buoy loose had not driven it any distance from its position.

They hauled Looney on board into the bows. The chattering went on; now Looney was making his way aft over the thwarts and between the men. He was rubbing something in a portion of his clothing as he came—something which he put into Hornblower's hand with a broad grin. Something disc-shaped and heavy, tarnished, encrusted, and yet—and yet. . . .

"God bless my soul," said Hornblower. It was a shilling.

To be continued next week

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The Old Folks
Face Up To It And
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Mr. Clever
Rivers Of Blood
The Listeners
Threw Off The Shackles
Blunt
Nearly All In
Making Merry
New Barmaid
Not A Bit Romantic
Panic In The Studio
Almost Extinct
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(See "Daily Herald" on Saturday, November 28, for early news of *Bullets* No. 1,911 result.)

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Across Clues XWORD 860

1. Kiddy rude to his mother shouldn't be surprised if she is this
3. It may eventually lead to arrest of thief
6. Builder's foreman wouldn't put one on, if he could help it
7. Not often are men to be seen preparing place for putting in these
9. You're lucky if one is enough to stop cat's nocturnal love song
12. Wise young men are wary about girls who do this
14. Very often plays part in stage productions
15. Many an artist's model finds it very hard to keep this

Down Clues

2. Work coming in at last minute usually makes typist do this
3. There are some astonishingly hard ones
4. Barrel of this should be pretty strong
5. Today there's a big fight for such sales in the mineral water market
8. May easily put a man off his bacon and eggs
10. Fine one may belong to a ring
11. One suspects that nudists are often
13. This is one way boss may have of commending a man's good work

XWORD 857 RESULT

WINNING WORDS. ACROSS: 1, Wench. 4, Vogue. 8, Rush. 10, Past. 11, Rooks. 12, River. 13, Sated. 14, Pew. DOWN: 1, Waiter. 2, Loose. 3, Punch. 5, Lay. 6, Aid. 7, Pep. 9, Snout.

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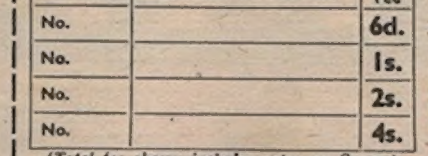

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Winner—sender of most meritorious set of Answers received—decided by Adjudication Committee on basis of aptness and accuracy. Ties divide. Entrants limited to one prize per contest and to entry needing not more than 8s. entry-fee. Signature indicates agreement to Rules.

ONE WEEK ONLY to post this week's coupon — last week's entry-form may be enclosed.

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